

## Carotid Angioplasty with Stenting

sMed# 01017

### What is it?

CPT Codes – 37215, 37216, 0075T, 0076T

Carotid angioplasty with stenting uses a catheter-based technique to treat carotid artery stenosis (narrowing of the carotid arteries which are the main arteries in the neck that supply blood to the brain). Carotid artery stenosis is treated to prevent stroke. This procedure is performed by accessing the arterial system, typically by route of the femoral artery. An embolic protection device, if used, is then advanced beyond the stenosed region. Its purpose is to catch and prevent any debris from traveling to the brain. Balloon angioplasty is then performed to dilate the lesion. This is followed by the placement of a stent. The embolic protection device is then removed. centers. Alternative treatment for this condition is carotid endarterectomy which is the surgical removal of stenotic plaque from the carotid artery which up to recently has been the “gold standard” of treatment.

### Criteria

Carotid angioplasty with stenting (cervical, extracranial vertebral or intrathoracic carotid artery) using a FDA approved carotid stent system and embolic protection device is considered medically necessary when **all** of the following criteria are met:

1. member has neurological symptoms with carotid stenosis of >50% **or** member is asymptomatic with carotid stenosis of >80% with stenosis verified by ultrasound or angiography; **and**,
2. member is considered high risk by having **any** of the following indications:
  - a) Carotid occlusion of the internal carotid artery affecting the opposite side of the body;
  - b) Laryngeal nerve paralysis affecting the opposite side of the body ;
  - c) Prior radiation therapy or radical surgery to the neck;
  - d) Previous carotid endarterectomy with recurrent stenosis;
  - e) Severe tandem lesions;
  - f) Class III or IV heart failure;
  - g) Left ventricular ejection fraction <30%;
  - h) Open heart surgery within prior six months;
  - i) Myocardial infarction 1 – 4 weeks prior to stenting;
  - j) Class III or IV angina;
  - k) Severe pulmonary disease;
  - l) Lesions are inaccessible for endarterectomy (above level of C2 or below the clavicle or obstructed by tumors in the neck), but can be stented;
  - m) Not a candidate for carotid endarterectomy (must be clearly documented in medical record).

NOTE: The carotid angioplasty with stenting CPT codes shown above, include all selective carotid catheterization and diagnostic imaging for carotid arteriography and all related radiological supervision and interpretation performed on the same side of the body.

■ Carotid angioplasty with stenting for all other indications is considered experimental and investigational or if stents are placed contrary to FDA approval and labeling guidelines.

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