Dynamic Stretching Devices
for the Treatment of Joint
Stiffness and Contracture
Policy Number: HS-164

Original Effective Date: 4/5/2010
Revised Date(s): 7/18/2011; 4/5/2012; 4/11/2013

DISCLAIMER
The Clinical Coverage Guideline is intended to supplement certain standard WellCare benefit plans. The terms of a member’s particular Benefit Plan, Evidence of Coverage, Certificate of Coverage, etc., may differ significantly from this Coverage Position. For example, a member’s benefit plan may contain specific exclusions related to the topic addressed in this Clinical Coverage Guideline. When a conflict exists between the two documents, the Member’s Benefit Plan always supersedes the information contained in the Clinical Coverage Guideline. Additionally, Clinical Coverage Guidelines relate exclusively to the administration of health benefit plans and are NOT recommendations for treatment, nor should they be used as treatment guidelines. The application of the Clinical Coverage Guideline is subject to the benefit determinations set forth by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) National and Local Coverage Determinations and state-specific Medicaid mandates, if any. Note: The lines of business (LOB) are subject to change without notice; consult www.wellcare.com/Providers/CCGs for list of current LOBs.

APPLICATION STATEMENT
The application of the Clinical Coverage Guideline is subject to the benefit determinations set forth by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) National and Local Coverage Determinations and state-specific Medicaid mandates, if any.
BACKGROUND

A joint contracture is characterized by chronically reduced range of motion (ROM) secondary to structural changes in non-bony tissues including muscle, tendons, ligaments, and skin. Prolonged immobilization of joints following surgery or trauma is the most common cause of joint contractures. While immobilization may prevent excess tension to the joint and prevent disruption of the healing of repaired tissues, it can also cause pathologic conditions that contribute to the development of joint contractures. Other causes of joint contractures include spasticity secondary to nerve damage, such as stroke or spinal cord injury and muscle weakness due to muscle, tendon, or ligament disease including paralysis.

Various types of physical therapy are often prescribed to restore normal joint mobility, particularly after surgical intervention. Techniques include active and passive range of motion exercises, manual stretching, splinting and serial casting. Manual physical therapy involves the use of passive stretching with progressively greater loads of force to extend the joint beyond its limited range of motion. Manual physical therapy is limited in terms of the number and duration of sessions and stretching devices are often considered when this physical therapy is unable to achieve treatment goals.

Classification of Stretching Devices

- **Dynamic low-load prolonged-duration stretch (LLPS) devices**: LLPS devices are set at a fixed joint angle and worn for extended periods each day. Examples of LLPS devices include but are not limited to:
  - Dynasplint System®
  - Dynasplint® Trismus System
  - EMPI Advance Dynamic ROM®
  - LMB Pro-Glide™

- **Bi-directional static progressive stretch (SPS) devices**: SPS devices are used for multiple short term sessions per day with the joint angle progressively advanced at each session. SPS devices allow the member to duplicate physical therapy by therapists who apply a new positional stretch multiple times throughout the session. Examples of SPS devices include but are not limited to:
  - Joint Active Systems (JAS) splints including JAS Elbow, JAS Shoulder, JAS Ankle, JAS Knee, JAS Wrist and JAS Pronation-Supination) and Air Cast®

- **Patient-actuated serial stretch (PASS) devices**: PASS devices allow resisted active and passive motion within a limited range. PASS devices supply a low to high-level load to the joint, using pneumatic or hydraulic systems that can be adjusted by the member. Examples of PASS devices include but are not limited to:
  - ERMi Knee Extensorator®
  - ERMi Elbow Extensionator®
  - ERMi Knee/Ankle Flexionator®
  - ERMi Shoulder Flexionator®

POSITION STATEMENT

Dynamic, low-load prolonged-duration stretch (LLPS) devices for the knee, elbow, wrist or finger are considered medically necessary in ANY of the following circumstances:

1. In addition to physical therapy in the subacute injury or post-operative period (greater than or equal to 3 weeks but less than or equal to 4 months after injury or operation) in members with signs and symptoms of persistent joint stiffness or contracture; OR,
2. In the subacute injury or post-operative period (greater than or equal to 3 weeks but less than or equal to 4 months after injury or operation) in a member:

- Whose limited range of motion poses a meaningful functional limitation as judged by the physician; AND,
- Who has not responded to other therapy (including physical therapy)

OR,

1. In the acute post-operative period for members who have undergone additional surgery to improve the range of motion of the previously affected joint; OR,

2. For members unable to benefit from standard physical therapy modalities because of inability to exercise.

Dynamic, low-load prolonged-duration stretch (LLPS) devices for the knee, elbow, wrist or finger shall be used for an initial period of four weeks. An evaluation is done after the four week period. If after the initial four week period the member shows improvement, then the device may be used for as long as improvement continues to be demonstrated. Evaluations are done every four weeks to check for improvement and efficacy.

If there is no significant improvements after four weeks of use, LLPS devices are considered NOT medically necessary under any circumstance, including but not limited to for members unable to benefit from standard physical modalities because of the inability to exercise.

Bi-directional static progressive stretch (SPS) devices and patient-actuated serial stretch (PASS) devices are considered experimental and investigational and are NOT a covered benefit.

**Coding**

**Covered CPT® Codes** - No applicable codes

**ICD-9-CM Procedure Codes** - No applicable codes

**Covered HCPCS Level II® Codes**

- E1800 Dynamic adjustable elbow extension/flexion device, includes soft interface material
- E1802 Dynamic adjustable forearm pronation/supination device, includes soft interface material [not covered for carpal tunnel syndrome]
- E1805 Dynamic adjustable wrist extension/flexion device, includes soft interface material [not covered for carpal tunnel syndrome]
- E1810 Dynamic adjustable knee extension/flexion device, includes soft interface material
- E1812 Dynamic knee, extension/flexion device with active resistance control
- E1825 Dynamic adjustable finger extension/flexion device, includes soft interface material

**Non-Covered HCPCS Level II® Codes**

- E1801 Static progressive stretch elbow device, extension and/or flexion, with or without range of motion adjustment, includes all components and accessories
- E1806 Static progressive stretch wrist device, flexion and/or extension, with or without range of motion adjustment, includes all components and accessories
- E1811 Static progressive stretch knee device, extension and/or flexion, with or without range of motion adjustment, includes all components and accessories
- E1815 Dynamic adjustable ankle extension/flexion device, includes soft interface material
- E1816 Static progressive stretch ankle device, flexion and/or extension, with or without range of motion adjustment, includes all components and accessories
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E1818  Static progressive stretch forearm pronation/supination device, with or without range of motion adjustment, includes all components and accessories
E1821  Replacement soft interface material/cuffs for bi-directional static progressive stretch device
E1830  Dynamic adjustable toe extension/flexion device, includes soft interface material
E1840  Dynamic adjustable shoulder flexion/abduction/rotation device, includes soft interface material
E1841  Static progressive stretch shoulder device, with or without range of motion adjustment, includes all components and accessories

Covered ICD-9-CM Diagnosis Codes
718.42  Elbow, Contracture of joint
718.43  Wrist, Contracture of joint
718.44  Hand, Contracture of joint
718.46  Knee, Contracture of joint
719.52  Elbow, Stiffness of joint
719.53  Wrist, Stiffness of joint
719.54  Finger, Stiffness of joint
719.56  Knee, Stiffness of joint

Covered ICD-10-CM Diagnosis Codes
M24.521 - M24.529  Contracture, elbow
M24.531 - M24.539  Contracture, wrist
M24.541 - M24.549  Contracture, hand
M24.561 - M24.569  Contracture, knee
M25.621 - M25.629  Stiffness of elbow, not elsewhere classified
M25.631 - M25.639  Stiffness of wrist, not elsewhere classified
M25.641 - M25.649  Stiffness of hand, not elsewhere classified
M25.651 - M25.669  Stiffness of knee, not elsewhere classified


REFERENCES

Peer Reviewed

HISTORY AND REVISIONS

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<td>Approved by MPC. No changes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/1/2011</td>
<td>New template design approved by MPC.</td>
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<td>7/18/2011</td>
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REGULATORY APPROVALS

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