NASAL RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY
RHINOPLASTY/SEPTOPLASTY

Description

Nasal surgery is defined as any procedure performed on the external or internal structures of the nose, septum or turbinates. Nasal surgery generally involves rearrangement or excision of the supporting bony and cartilaginous structures, and incision or excision of the overlying skin of the nose. Reconstructive nasal surgery is performed to improve nasal respiratory function, treat anatomic abnormalities caused by birth defects or disease, and revise structural deformities resulting from trauma.\(^1\)

- Rhinoplasty is a surgical procedure that transforms nasal abnormalities or damaged nasal structures to a more normal state.\(^2\)

- Septoplasty is the surgical procedure that corrects nasal septum defects or deformities, by alteration, splinting, or partial removal of obstructing supporting structures.\(^3\)

Total Health Care (THC) considers requests for rhinoplasty and/or septoplasty on a case-by-case basis and only when determined to be medically necessary and decision criteria are satisfied. THC utilizes criteria derived from evidenced based medicine and nationally recognized Standards of Care guidelines. Additional factors taken into consideration during the clinical review process include (not all inclusive): age; pertinent past and current medical history; current and past medical treatment and outcome; individual need; local delivery system, and psychosocial factors (when applicable).\(^4\)

Decision Criteria

Administrative

1. Referral is required from member’s Primary Care Physician (PCP) along with supporting medical documentation. Appropriate medical documentation includes:
   a. Member’s name and THC identification number
   b. Proposed date of procedure and facility
   c. Name and contact information for requesting provider
   d. ENT and or plastic surgery consultation report
   e. Progress notes including history and physical dictation relating to condition(s)
   f. Photographs (preferred but not required)
   g. Diagnostic studies (e.g., facial x-rays; CT scan; nasal air flow studies; and nasal endoscopy)
2. Services must be performed by a THC affiliated or contracted physician, hospital, or other provider.
3. THC’s Medical Director must pre-authorize the procedure(s).
4. Member must have current eligibility on Date of Service (DOS).
5. Procedure(s) is for medically necessity reason(s) and is not cosmetic in nature.
Clinical

1. Medical documentation includes history substantiating affected member has difficulty breathing at rest; difficulty breathing with exercise; and recurrent nose bleeds.  
2. Physical exam documents presence of deformity in the nasal area, deviated septum by nasal speculum exam, and turbinate hypertrophy.  
3. **Septoplasty** is medically appropriate when:  
   a. The septal deviation is caused by chronic nasal airway obstruction associated with mouth breathing, snoring, sleep apnea, or recurrent sinus infections.  
   b. Symptoms must be refractory to adequate conservative management.  
   c. CT or x-ray must document opacification of a sinus, air fluid levels or mucosal thickening.  
   d. Associated with recurrent epistaxis  
   e. Surgical access to other intranasal or paranasal areas is prevented where surgical intervention is medically necessary.  
   f. Associated with perforation, trauma, cancer and congenital malformations.

4. **Rhinoplasty** is considered medically appropriate when:  
   a. There is a diagnosis of Wegener’s granulomatosis; choanal atresia, cancer, septal infection with saddle deformity, or congenital deformity such as cleft palate.  
   b. Significant, documented nasal trauma within 3 months prior to scheduled surgery.  
   c. Nasal fracture with distortion.

Bibliography

2. Same as #1
3. Same as #1
4. NCQA, 2006 Standards and Guidelines for MCOs; National Committee for Quality Assurance, 2000 L Street NW, Suite 500 Washington, DC 20036
5. Same as #1
6. Same as #1
7. Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield “Rhinoplasty and Submucuous Resection-Clinical” E07.99.27, Effective Date 10/25/02
8. Same as #7
9. Same as #7