

Medical Policy



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Surgical Dressings

Background/Description

A surgical dressing is a cover over a wound or surgical incision. Examples of wounds include but are not limited to cellulitis (with an open wound), ulcerated wounds (e.g., pressure, diabetic), stasis ulcers, or burns.

Policy Guidelines

If the coverage criteria described below are not met, the claim will be denied as not reasonable and necessary.

Coverage Criteria:

Surgical dressings are covered when a qualifying wound is present. A qualifying wound is defined as **either** of the following (**not applicable to MassHealth or BeHealthy members**):

- A wound caused by, or treated by, a surgical procedure; or,
- After debridement of the wound, regardless of the debridement technique.

The surgical procedure or debridement must be performed by a treating practitioner or other healthcare professional to the extent permissible under State law. Debridement of a wound may be any type of debridement (examples given are not all-inclusive):

- Surgical (e.g., sharp instrument or laser)
- Mechanical (e.g., irrigation or wet-to-dry dressings)
- Chemical (e.g., topical application of enzymes) or
- Autolytic (e.g., application of occlusive dressings to an open wound).

Dressings used for mechanical debridement, to cover chemical debriding agents, or to cover wounds to allow for autolytic debridement are covered although the debridement agents themselves are noncovered.

Surgical dressings are covered for as long as they are medically necessary. Dressings over a percutaneous catheter or tube (e.g., intravascular, epidural, nephrostomy, etc.) are covered as long as the catheter or tube remains in place and after removal until the wound heals.

Surgical dressings used in conjunction with investigational wound healing therapy (e.g., platelet derived wound healing formula) may be covered if all applicable coverage criteria are met based on the number and type of surgical dressings that are appropriate to treat the wound if the investigational therapy were not being used.

When a wound cover with an adhesive border is being used, no other dressing is needed on top of it and additional tape is usually not required. Reasons for use of additional tape must be well documented. An adhesive border is usually more binding than that obtained

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with separate taping and is therefore indicated for use with wounds requiring less frequent dressing changes.

Use of more than one type of wound filler or more than one type of wound cover in a single wound is rarely medically necessary and the reasons must be well documented. An exception is an alginate or other fiber gelling dressing wound cover, or a saline, water, or hydrogel impregnated gauze dressing which might need an additional wound cover.

It may not be appropriate to use some combinations of a hydrating dressing on the same wound at the same time as an absorptive dressing (e.g., hydrogel and alginate).

Because composite dressings, foam and hydrocolloid wound covers, and transparent film, when used as secondary dressings, are meant to be changed at frequencies less than daily, appropriate clinical judgment should be used to avoid their use with primary dressings which require more frequent dressing changes. When claims are submitted for these dressings for changes greater than once every other day, the quantity in excess of that amount will be denied as not reasonable and necessary. While a highly exudative wound might require such a combination initially, with continued proper management the wound usually progresses to a point where the appropriate selection of these products results in the less frequent dressing changes which they are designed to allow. An example of an inappropriate combination is the use of a specialty absorptive dressing on top of non-impregnated gauze being used as a primary dressing.

Dressing size must be based on and appropriate to the size of the wound. For wound covers, the pad size is usually about 2 inches greater than the dimensions of the wound. For example, a 5 cm x 5 cm (2 in. x 2 in.) wound requires a 4 in. x 4 in. pad size.

The quantity and type of dressings dispensed at any one time must take into account the current status of the wound(s), the likelihood of change, and the recent use of dressings.

Dressing needs may change frequently (e.g., weekly) in the early phases of wound treatment and/or with heavily draining wounds. Suppliers are also expected to have a mechanism for determining the quantity of dressings that the patient is actually using and to adjust their provision of dressings accordingly. No more than a one month's supply of dressings may be provided at one time unless there is documentation to support the necessity of greater quantities in the home setting in an individual case. An even smaller quantity may be appropriate in the situations described above.

Surgical dressings must be tailored to the specific needs of an individual patient. When surgical dressings are provided in kits, only those components of the kit that meet the definition of a surgical dressing, that are ordered by the treating practitioner, and that are medically necessary are covered.

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The following are some specific coverage guidelines for individual products when the products themselves are necessary in the individual patient. The medical necessity for more frequent change of dressing must be documented in the patient's medical record and submitted with the claim.

ALGINATE OR OTHER FIBER GELLING DRESSING (A6196-A6199):

Alginate or other fiber gelling dressing covers are covered for moderately to highly exudative full thickness wounds (e.g., stage III or IV ulcers); and alginate or other fiber gelling dressing fillers for moderately to highly exudative full thickness wound cavities (e.g., stage III or IV ulcers). They are not medically necessary on dry wounds or wounds covered with eschar. Usual dressing change is up to once per day. One wound cover sheet of the approximate size of the wound or up to 2 units of wound filler (1 unit = 6 inches of alginate or other fiber gelling dressing rope) is usually used at each dressing change. It is usually inappropriate to use alginates or other fiber gelling dressings in combination with hydrogels.

COMPOSITE DRESSING (A6203-A6205):

Usual composite dressing change is up to 3 times per week, one wound cover per dressing change.

CONTACT LAYER (A6206-A6208):

Contact layer dressings are used to line the entire wound; they are not intended to be changed with each dressing change. Usual dressing change is up to once per week.

FOAM DRESSING (A6209-A6215):

Foam dressings are covered when used on full thickness wounds (e.g., stage III or IV ulcers) with moderate to heavy exudate. Usual dressing change for a foam wound cover used as a primary dressing is up to 3 times per week. When a foam wound cover is used as a secondary dressing for wounds with very heavy exudate, dressing change may be up to 3 times per week. Usual dressing change for foam wound fillers is up to once per day.

GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED (A6216-A6221, A6402-A6404, A6407):

Usual non-impregnated gauze dressing change is up to 3 times per day for a dressing without a border and once per day for a dressing with a border. It is usually not necessary to stack more than 2 gauze pads on top of each other in any one area.

GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, WITH OTHER THAN WATER, NORMAL SALINE, HYDROGEL, OR ZINC PASTE (A6222-A6224, A6266):

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Usual dressing change for gauze dressings impregnated with other than water, normal saline, hydrogel, or zinc paste is up to once per day.

GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, WATER OR NORMAL SALINE (A6228-A6230):

There is no medical necessity for these dressings compared to non-impregnated gauze which is moistened with bulk saline or sterile water. When these dressings are billed, they will be denied as not reasonable and necessary.

HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING (A6234-A6241):

Hydrocolloid dressings are covered for use on wounds with light to moderate exudate. Usual dressing change for hydrocolloid wound covers or hydrocolloid wound fillers is up to 3 times per week.

HYDROGEL DRESSING (A6231-A6233, A6242-A6248):

Hydrogel dressings are covered when used on full thickness wounds with minimal or no exudate (e.g., stage III or IV ulcers). Hydrogel dressings are not usually medically necessary for stage II ulcers. Documentation must substantiate the medical necessity for use of hydrogel dressings for stage II ulcers (e.g., location of ulcer is sacro-coccygeal area). Usual dressing change for hydrogel wound covers without adhesive border or hydrogel wound fillers is up to once per day. Usual dressing change for hydrogel wound covers with adhesive border is up to 3 times per week.

The quantity of hydrogel filler used for each wound must not exceed the amount needed to line the surface of the wound. Additional amounts used to fill a cavity are not medically necessary. Documentation must substantiate the medical necessity for code A6248 billed in excess of 3 units (fluid ounces) per wound in 30 days.

Use of more than one type of hydrogel dressing (filler, cover, or impregnated gauze) on the same wound at the same time is not medically necessary.

SPECIALTY ABSORPTIVE DRESSING (A6251-A6256):

Specialty absorptive dressings are covered when used for moderately or highly exudative wounds (e.g., stage III or IV ulcers). Usual specialty absorptive dressing change is up to once per day for a dressing without an adhesive border and up to every other day for a dressing with a border.

TRANSPARENT FILM (A6257-A6259):

Transparent film dressings are covered when used on open partial thickness wounds with minimal exudate or closed wounds. Usual dressing change is up to 3 times per week.

WOUND FILLER, NOT ELSEWHERE CLASSIFIED (A6261-A6262):

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Usual dressing change is up to once per day.

WOUND POUCH (A6154):

Usual dressing change is up to 3 times per week.

TAPE (A4450, A4452):

Tape is covered when needed to hold on a wound cover, elastic roll gauze or non-elastic roll gauze. Additional tape is usually not required when a wound cover with an adhesive border is used. The medical necessity for tape in these situations must be documented. Tape change is determined by the frequency of change of the wound cover. Quantities of tape submitted must reasonably reflect the size of the wound cover being secured. Usual use for wound covers measuring 16 square inches or less is up to 2 units per dressing change; for wound covers measuring 16 to 48 square inches, up to 3 units per dressing change; for wound covers measuring greater than 48 square inches, up to 4 units per dressing change.

LIGHT COMPRESSION BANDAGE (A6448-A6450), MODERATE/HIGH COMPRESSION BANDAGE (A6451, A6452), SELF-ADHERENT BANDAGE (A6453-A6455), CONFORMING BANDAGE (A6442-A6447), PADDING BANDAGE (A6441):

Most compression bandages are reusable. Usual frequency of replacement would be no more than one per week unless they are part of a multi-layer compression bandage system.

Conforming bandage dressing change is determined by the frequency of change of the selected underlying dressing.

GRADIENT COMPRESSION WRAP (A6545):

Coverage of a non-elastic gradient compression wrap (A6545) is limited to one per 6 months per leg. Quantities exceeding this amount will be denied as not reasonable and necessary.

HCPCS Level II Codes and Description

A4450 TAPE, NON-WATERPROOF, PER 18 SQUARE INCHES

A4452 TAPE, WATERPROOF, PER 18 SQUARE INCHES

A4461 SURGICAL DRESSING HOLDER, NON-REUSABLE, EACH

A4463 SURGICAL DRESSING HOLDER, REUSABLE, EACH

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- A4465 NON-ELASTIC BINDER FOR EXTREMITY
- A4649 SURGICAL SUPPLY; MISCELLANEOUS
- A6010 COLLAGEN BASED WOUND FILLER, DRY FORM, STERILE, PER GRAM OF COLLAGEN
- A6011 COLLAGEN BASED WOUND FILLER, GEL/PASTE, STERILE, PER GRAM OF COLLAGEN
- A6021 COLLAGEN DRESSING, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, EACH
- A6022 COLLAGEN DRESSING, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., EACH
- A6023 COLLAGEN DRESSING, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., EACH
- A6024 COLLAGEN DRESSING WOUND FILLER, STERILE, PER 6 INCHES
- A6025 GEL SHEET FOR DERMAL OR EPIDERMAL APPLICATION, (E.G., SILICONE, HYDROGEL, OTHER), EACH
- A6154 WOUND POUCH, EACH
- A6196 ALGINATE OR OTHER FIBER GELLING DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, EACH DRESSING
- A6197 ALGINATE OR OTHER FIBER GELLING DRESSING, STERILE, WOUND COVER, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING
- A6198 ALGINATE OR OTHER FIBER GELLING DRESSING, STERILE, WOUND COVER, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING
- A6199 ALGINATE OR OTHER FIBER GELLING DRESSING, STERILE, WOUND FILLER, PER 6 INCHES
- A6203 COMPOSITE DRESSING, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6204 COMPOSITE DRESSING, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6205 COMPOSITE DRESSING, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6206 CONTACT LAYER, STERILE, 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, EACH DRESSING

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- A6207 CONTACT LAYER, STERILE, MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING
- A6208 CONTACT LAYER, STERILE, MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING
- A6209 FOAM DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6210 FOAM DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6211 FOAM DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6212 FOAM DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6213 FOAM DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6214 FOAM DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6215 FOAM DRESSING, WOUND FILLER, STERILE, PER GRAM
- A6216 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, NON-STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6217 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, NON-STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6218 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, NON-STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6219 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6220 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6221 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING
- A6222 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED WITH OTHER THAN WATER, NORMAL

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SALINE, OR HYDROGEL, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6223 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED WITH OTHER THAN WATER, NORMAL SALINE, OR HYDROGEL, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQUARE INCHES, BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQUARE INCHES, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6224 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED WITH OTHER THAN WATER, NORMAL SALINE, OR HYDROGEL, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQUARE INCHES, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6228 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, WATER OR NORMAL SALINE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, STERILE, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6229 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, WATER OR NORMAL SALINE, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6230 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, WATER OR NORMAL SALINE, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6231 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, HYDROGEL, FOR DIRECT WOUND CONTACT, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, EACH DRESSING

A6232 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, HYDROGEL, FOR DIRECT WOUND CONTACT, STERILE, PAD SIZE GREATER THAN 16 SQ. IN., BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING

A6233 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, HYDROGEL FOR DIRECT WOUND CONTACT, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING

A6234 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6235 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6236 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6237 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH

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DRESSING

A6238 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6239 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6240 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND FILLER, PASTE, STERILE, PER FLUID OUNCE

A6241 HYDROCOLLOID DRESSING, WOUND FILLER, DRY FORM, STERILE, PER GRAM

A6242 HYDROGEL DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6243 HYDROGEL DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6244 HYDROGEL DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6245 HYDROGEL DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6246 HYDROGEL DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6247 HYDROGEL DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6248 HYDROGEL DRESSING, WOUND FILLER, GEL, STERILE, PER FLUID OUNCE

A6250 SKIN SEALANTS, PROTECTANTS, MOISTURIZERS, OINTMENTS, ANY TYPE, ANY SIZE

A6251 SPECIALTY ABSORPTIVE DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6252 SPECIALTY ABSORPTIVE DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD

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SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6253 SPECIALTY ABSORPTIVE DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6254 SPECIALTY ABSORPTIVE DRESSING, WOUND COVER, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6255 SPECIALTY ABSORPTIVE DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6256 SPECIALTY ABSORPTIVE DRESSING, WOUND COVER, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITH ANY SIZE ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6257 TRANSPARENT FILM, STERILE, 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, EACH DRESSING

A6258 TRANSPARENT FILM, STERILE, MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. BUT LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING

A6259 TRANSPARENT FILM, STERILE, MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., EACH DRESSING

A6260 WOUND CLEANSERS, STERILE, ANY TYPE, ANY SIZE

A6261 WOUND FILLER, GEL/PASTE, STERILE, PER FLUID OUNCE, NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.

A6262 WOUND FILLER, DRY FORM, STERILE, PER GRAM, NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.

A6266 GAUZE, IMPREGNATED, OTHER THAN WATER, NORMAL SALINE, OR ZINC PASTE, STERILE, ANY WIDTH, PER LINEAR YARD

A6402 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, STERILE, PAD SIZE 16 SQ. IN. OR LESS, WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6403 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 16 SQ. IN. LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

A6404 GAUZE, NON-IMPREGNATED, STERILE, PAD SIZE MORE THAN 48 SQ. IN., WITHOUT ADHESIVE BORDER, EACH DRESSING

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A6407 PACKING STRIPS, NON-IMPREGNATED, STERILE, UP TO 2 INCHES IN WIDTH, PER LINEAR YARD

A6410 EYE PAD, STERILE, EACH

A6411 EYE PAD, NON-STERILE, EACH

A6412 EYE PATCH, OCCLUSIVE, EACH

A6413 ADHESIVE BANDAGE, FIRST AID TYPE, ANY SIZE, EACH

A6441 PADDING BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, NON-WOVEN/NON-KNITTED, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6442 CONFORMING BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, NON-STERILE, WIDTH LESS THAN THREE INCHES, PER YARD

A6443 CONFORMING BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, NON-STERILE, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6444 CONFORMING BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, NON-STERILE, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO 5 INCHES, PER YARD

A6445 CONFORMING BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, STERILE, WIDTH LESS THAN THREE INCHES, PER YARD

A6446 CONFORMING BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, STERILE, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6447 CONFORMING BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, STERILE, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6448 LIGHT COMPRESSION BANDAGE, ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, WIDTH LESS THAN THREE INCHES, PER YARD

A6449 LIGHT COMPRESSION BANDAGE, ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6450 LIGHT COMPRESSION BANDAGE, ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6451 MODERATE COMPRESSION BANDAGE, ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, LOAD RESISTANCE OF 1.25 TO 1.34 FOOT POUNDS AT 50% MAXIMUM STRETCH, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES

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AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6452 HIGH COMPRESSION BANDAGE, ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, LOAD RESISTANCE GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO 1.35 FOOT POUNDS AT 50% MAXIMUM STRETCH, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6453 SELF-ADHERENT BANDAGE, ELASTIC, NON-KNITTED/NON-WOVEN, WIDTH LESS THAN THREE INCHES, PER YARD

A6454 SELF-ADHERENT BANDAGE, ELASTIC, NON-KNITTED/NON-WOVEN, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6455 SELF-ADHERENT BANDAGE, ELASTIC, NON-KNITTED/NON-WOVEN, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6456 ZINC PASTE IMPREGNATED BANDAGE, NON-ELASTIC, KNITTED/WOVEN, WIDTH GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO THREE INCHES AND LESS THAN FIVE INCHES, PER YARD

A6457 TUBULAR DRESSING WITH OR WITHOUT ELASTIC, ANY WIDTH, PER LINEAR YARD

A6531 GRADIENT COMPRESSION STOCKING, BELOW KNEE, 30-40 MMHG, USED AS A SURGICAL DRESSING, EACH

A6532 GRADIENT COMPRESSION STOCKING, BELOW KNEE, 40-50 MMHG, USED AS A SURGICAL DRESSING, EACH

A6545 GRADIENT COMPRESSION WRAP, NON-ELASTIC, BELOW KNEE, 30-50 MMHG, USED AS A SURGICAL DRESSING, EACH

Documentation Requirement

1. Compression wrap is limited to **one per 6 months per leg**. Quantities exceeding this amount will be denied as not reasonable and necessary.
2. The treating practitioner's order must specify (a) the type of dressing (e.g., hydrocolloid wound cover, hydrogel wound filler, etc.), (b) the size of the dressing (if appropriate), (c) the number/amount to be used at one time (if more than one), (d) the frequency of dressing change.
3. A new order is needed if a new dressing is added or if the quantity of an existing dressing to be used is increased. A new order is not routinely needed if the

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quantity of dressings used is decreased. However, a new order is required at least every 3 months for each dressing being used even if the quantity used has remained the same or decreased.

4. Information defining the number of qualifying surgical/debrided wounds being treated with a dressing, the reason for dressing use (e.g., surgical wound, debrided wound, etc.), and whether the dressing is being used as a primary or secondary dressing or for some non covered use (e.g., using a dressing for wound cleansing) must be obtained from the treating practitioner or home care nurse. The source of that information and date obtained must be documented and sent in with the claim.
5. Current clinical information which supports the reasonableness and necessity of the type and quantity of surgical dressings provided must be documented and sent in with the claim. Evaluation of a Member's wound(s) must be performed at least on a monthly basis unless there is documentation sent in with the claim which justifies why an evaluation could not be done within this timeframe and what other monitoring methods were used to evaluate the Member's need for dressings. Evaluation is expected on a more frequent basis (e.g., weekly) in Members with heavily draining or infected wounds. The evaluation may be performed by a nurse, physician or other health care professional. This evaluation must include the type of each wound (e.g., surgical wound, pressure ulcer, burn, etc), its location, its size (length x width in cm.) and depth, the amount of drainage, and any other relevant information. This information must be documented and sent in with the claim.
6. When codes A4649, A6261 or A6262 are billed, the claim must include a narrative description of the item (including size of the product provided), the manufacturer, the brand name or number, and information justifying the medical necessity for the item. This information must be entered in the narrative field of the electronic claim.
7. The RT and/or LT modifiers must be used with codes A6531, A6532, and A6545 for gradient compression stockings and wraps. Effective for claims with dates of service (DOS) on or after 3/1/2019, when the same code for bilateral items (left and right) is billed on the same date of service, bill each item on two separate claim lines using the RT and LT modifiers and 1 unit of service (UOS) on each claim line. Do not use the RTLT modifier on the same claim line and billed with 2 UOS. Claims billed without modifiers RT and/or LT, or with RTLT on the same claim line and 2 UOS, will be rejected as incorrect coding.

Classification Systems

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The staging of pressure ulcers used in this policy is as follows (National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel, 2019 Revision): The pressure ulcer classification staging system describes the severity level of a pressure ulcer.

Stage 1 Pressure Injury: Non-blanchable erythema of intact skin

Intact skin with a localized area of non-blanchable erythema, which may appear differently in darkly pigmented skin. Presence of blanchable erythema or changes in sensation, temperature, or firmness may precede visual changes. Color changes do not include purple or maroon discoloration; these may indicate deep tissue pressure injury.

Stage 2 Pressure Injury: Partial-thickness skin loss with exposed dermis

Partial-thickness loss of skin with exposed dermis. The wound bed is viable, pink or red, moist, and may also present as an intact or ruptured serum-filled blister. Adipose (fat) is not visible and deeper tissues are not visible. Granulation tissue, slough and eschar are not present. These injuries commonly result from adverse microclimate and shear in the skin over the pelvis and shear in the heel. This stage should not be used to describe moisture associated skin damage (MASD) including incontinence associated dermatitis (IAD), intertriginous dermatitis (ITD), medical adhesive related skin injury (MARSI), or traumatic wounds (skin tears, burns, abrasions).

Stage 3 Pressure Injury: Full-thickness skin loss

Full-thickness loss of skin, in which adipose (fat) is visible in the ulcer and granulation tissue and epibole (rolled wound edges) are often present. Slough and/or eschar may be visible. The depth of tissue damage varies by anatomical location; areas of significant adiposity can develop deep wounds. Undermining and tunneling may occur. Fascia, muscle, tendon, ligament, cartilage and/or bone are not exposed. If slough or eschar obscures the extent of tissue loss this is an Unstageable Pressure Injury.

Stage 4 Pressure Injury: Full-thickness skin and tissue loss

Full-thickness skin and tissue loss with exposed or directly palpable fascia, muscle, tendon, ligament, cartilage or bone in the ulcer. Slough and/or eschar may be visible. Epibole (rolled edges), undermining and/or tunneling often occur. Depth varies by anatomical location. If slough or eschar obscures the extent of tissue loss this is an Unstageable Pressure Injury.

Unstageable Pressure Injury: Obscured full-thickness skin and tissue loss

Full-thickness skin and tissue loss in which the extent of tissue damage within the ulcer cannot be confirmed because it is obscured by slough or eschar. If slough or

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eschar is removed, a Stage 3 or Stage 4 pressure injury will be revealed. Stable eschar (i.e., dry, adherent, intact without erythema or fluctuance) on the heel or ischemic limb should not be softened or removed.

Deep Tissue Pressure Injury: Persistent non-blanchable deep red, maroon or purple discoloration Intact or non-intact skin with localized area of persistent non-blanchable deep red, maroon, purple discoloration or epidermal separation revealing a dark wound bed or blood filled blister. Pain and temperature change often precede skin color changes. Discoloration may appear differently in darkly pigmented skin. This injury results from intense and/or prolonged pressure and shear forces at the bone-muscle interface. The wound may evolve rapidly to reveal the actual extent of tissue injury or may resolve without tissue loss. If necrotic tissue, subcutaneous tissue, granulation tissue, fascia, muscle or other underlying structures are visible, this indicates a full thickness pressure injury (Unstageable, Stage 3 or Stage 4). Do not use DTPI to describe vascular, traumatic, neuropathic, or dermatologic conditions.

Definitions

Debridement of a wound may be any type of debridement (examples given are not all-inclusive):

- Surgical (e.g., sharp instrument or laser),
- Mechanical (e.g., irrigation or wet-to-dry dressings),
- Chemical (e.g., topical application of enzymes),
- Autolytic (e.g., application of occlusive dressings to an open wound).

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FOR HEALTH NEW ENGLAND MEMBERS

The staging above does **not** apply to **diabetic** wounds/ulcers as different factors are taken into account. Diabetic wounds have different assessment methodology utilizing multiple grading systems.

Some practitioners may use the following guides to describe a diabetic foot ulcer.

Diabetic Foot Ulcer Classification Systems: The diabetic foot ulcer classification grading system is used to describe the severity level of an ulcer resulting from complications of diabetes. Some examples are:

1) Wagner Diabetic Foot Ulcer Grade Classification System

The Wagner Classification System (sometimes referred to as Merritt-Wagner) comprises six ulcer grades, ranging from 0 to 5. This system assesses ulcer depth and the presence of osteomyelitis or gangrene. The grades are as follows:

- Grade 0: Intact skin
- Grade 1: Superficial ulcer – Skin and subcutaneous tissue only
- Grade 2: Deep ulcer to tendon, muscle, joint capsule, or bone
- Grade 3: Deep ulcer with abscess, osteomyelitis, or tendinitis
- Grade 4: Partial foot gangrene
- Grade 5: Whole foot gangrene

Note: Grade 2 and above is considered a full thickness wound.

2) University of Texas Diabetic Foot Ulcer Classification System

This system uses four grades (0–3) and four stages (A–D) to classify DFUs. The grades correspond to depth, whereas the stages account for the severity of the wound by marking the presence of infection, ischemia, or both.

Grade:

- Grade 0: Pre- or post-ulcerative (Stages A to D)
- Grade 1: Full-thickness ulcer not involving tendon, capsule, or bone (Stages A to D)
- Grade 2: Tendon or capsular involvement without bone palpable (Stages A to D)
- Grade 3: Probes to bone (Stages A to D)

Stage:

- Stage A: Noninfected
- Stage B: Infected
- Stage C: Ischemic
- Stage D: Infected and ischemic

Wound Management Dressing Guide

Type of tissue in the wound	Therapeutic goal	Role of dressing	Treatment options		
			Wound bed preparation	Primary dressing	Secondary dressing

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<p>Necrotic, black, dry.</p>	<p>Remove devitalized tissue.</p> <p>Do not attempt debridement if vascular insufficiency suspected.</p> <p>Keep dry and refer for vascular assessment.</p>	<p>Hydration of wound bed.</p> <p>Promote autolytic debridement.</p>	<p>Surgical or mechanical debridement.</p>	<p>Hydrogel</p> <p>Honey</p>	<p>Polyurethane film dressing.</p>
<p>Sloughy, yellow, brown, black or grey.</p> <p>Dry to low exudate.</p>	<p>Remove slough.</p> <p>Provide clean wound bed for granulation tissue.</p>	<p>Rehydrate wound bed.</p> <p>Control moisture balance.</p> <p>Promote autolytic debridement.</p>	<p>Surgical or mechanical debridement, if appropriate.</p> <p>Wound cleansing (consider antiseptic wound cleansing solution).</p>	<p>Hydrogel</p> <p>Honey</p>	<p>Polyurethane film dressing.</p> <p>Low adherent (silicone) dressing.</p>
<p>Sloughy, yellow, brown, black or grey.</p> <p>Moderate to high exudate.</p>	<p>Remove slough.</p> <p>Provide clean wound bed for granulation tissue.</p> <p>Exudate management.</p>	<p>Absorb excess fluid.</p> <p>Protect periwound skin to prevent maceration.</p> <p>Promote autolytic debridement.</p>	<p>Surgical or mechanical debridement, if appropriate.</p> <p>Wound cleansing (consider antiseptic wound cleansing solution).</p> <p>Consider barrier products.</p>	<p>Absorbent dressing (alginate/CMC/foam).</p> <p>For deep wounds, use cavity strips, rope or ribbon versions.</p>	<p>Retention bandage or polyurethane film dressing.</p>
<p>Granulating, clean, red.</p> <p>Dry to low exudate.</p>	<p>Promote granulation.</p> <p>Provide healthy wound bed for epithelialization.</p>	<p>Maintain moisture balance.</p> <p>Protect new tissue growth.</p>	<p>Wound cleansing.</p>	<p>Hydrogel.</p> <p>Low adherent (silicone) dressing.</p>	<p>Pad and/or retention bandage.</p> <p>Avoid bandages that may cause occlusion and maceration.</p>

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				For deep wounds use cavity strips, rope or ribbon versions.	Tapes should be used with caution due to allergy potential and secondary complications.
Granulating, clean, red. Moderate to high exudate.	Exudate management. Provide healthy wound bed for epithelialization.	Maintain moisture balance. Protect new tissue growth.	Wound cleansing. Consider barrier products.	Absorbent dressing (alginate/CMC/foam). Low adherent (silicone) dressing. For deep wounds, use cavity strips, rope or ribbon versions.	
Epithelializing, red, pink. No to low exudate.	Promote epithelialization and wound maturation (contraction).	Protect new tissue growth.		Hydrocolloid (thin). Polyurethane film dressing. Low adherent (silicone) dressing.	
Infected. Low to high exudate.	Reduce bacterial load. Exudate management. Odor control.	Antimicrobial action. Moist wound healing. Odor absorption.	Wound cleansing (consider antiseptic wound cleansing solution). Consider barrier products.	Antimicrobial dressing.	

The purpose of this table is to provide guidance about appropriate dressings and should be used in conjunction with clinical judgement and local protocols. Where wounds contain mixed tissue types, it is important to consider the predominant factors affecting healing and address accordingly. Where

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infection is suspected, it is important to regularly inspect the wound and to change the dressing frequently. Wound dressings should be used in combination with appropriate wound bed preparation, systemic antibiotic therapy, pressure offloading, and diabetic control.

CMC (carboxymethyl cellulose)

Important Note:

Northwood's Medical Policies are developed to assist Northwood in administering plan benefits and determining whether a particular DMEPOS product or service is reasonable and necessary. Equipment that is used primarily and customarily for a non-medical purpose is not considered durable medical equipment.

Coverage determinations are made on a case-by-case basis and are subject to all of the terms, conditions, limitations, and exclusions of the member's contract including medical necessity requirements.

The conclusion that a DMEPOS product or service is reasonable and necessary does not constitute coverage. The member's contract defines which DMEPOS product or service is covered, excluded or limited. The policies provide for clearly written, reasonable and current criteria that have been approved by Northwood's Medical Director.

The clinical criteria and medical policies provide guidelines for determining the medical necessity for specific DMEPOS products or services. In all cases, final benefit determinations are based on the applicable contract language. To the extent there are any conflicts between medical policy guidelines and applicable contract language, the contract language prevails. Medical policy is not intended to override the policy that defines the member's benefits, nor is it intended to dictate to providers how to direct care. Northwood Medical policies shall not be interpreted to limit the benefits afforded to Medicare or Medicaid members by law and regulation and Northwood will use the applicable state requirements to determine required quantity limit guidelines.

Northwood's policies do not constitute medical advice. Northwood does not provide or recommend treatment to members. Members should consult with their treating practitioner in connection with diagnosis and treatment decisions. Northwood follows all CMS National Coverage Determinations (NCD) and Local Coverage Determinations (LCD), as applicable.

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Change/Authorization History

Revision Number	Date	Description of Change	Prepared / Reviewed by	Approved by	Review Date:	Effective Date:
A	11-20-06	Initial Release	Rosanne Brugnani	Ken Fasse	n/a	
01	12-2008	Changed descriptions for the staging of pressure ulcers and added HCPC codes A6413 and A6545	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse	n/a	
02		Annual Review – no additional changes	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse	Dec.2008	
03	01/01/09	Added A6545 Revised A6010-A6024 A6196-A6199 A6203-A6215	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse		

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		A6219-A6248 A6251-A6266 A6407 Codes were changed to reflect items as “sterile”				
04	12-22-09	Annual Review/ no changes	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse	Dec.2009	
05	01-05-10	Narrative change: A6549. Gradient compression stocking/sleeve, not otherwise specified. Discontinued codes: A6200; Composite dressing, pad size 16 sq. in. or less, without adhesive border, each dressing. Now A6251. A6201; Composite dressing, pad size more than 16 sq. in. but less than or equal to 48 sq.in., without adhesive border, each dressing. Now A6252. A6202; Composite dressing, pad size more than 48 sq.in. without adhesive border, each dressing. Now A6253. A6542; Gradient compression stocking, custom made. Now A6549. A6543; Gradient compression stocking, lymphedema . Now A6549	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse		
06	12-03-10	Annual Review – No Changes	Susan Glomb	Ken Fasse	Dec.2010	
07	07-20-11	Added Important Note to all Medical Policies	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri		
08	11-7-11	Annual Review. Policy References Added. Inclusion of Abdominal Binder/Abdominal	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	November 2011	

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		Support into this Policy.				
09	12-04-12	Annual review – no changes.	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri	Dec. 2012	
10	12-30-13	Annual review. No changes.	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri		
11	12-1-14	Annual Review. No changes	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri		
12	12-11-15	Annual review. Updated policy with Medicare policy. Updated references.	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri		
13	5-24-16	Clarified # 4- added that dressings are not covered for use in wound cleansing.	Susan Glomb	Dr. B. Almasri		
14	12-08-16	Annual Review. No Changes.	Lisa Wojno	Dr. B. Almasri	December 2016	
15	12-16-17	Annual review. Revised: Staging guidelines to reflect NPUAP 2016 Staging Consensus Conference.	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	December 2017	
16	12-7-18	Annual review. Medicare references updated.	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	December 2018	
17	12-19-19	Annual review. Per CGS, removed “expected duration of need” from order specifications. Added RT and/or LT modifier instructions.	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	December 2019	December 2019
18	9-3-20	Clarification of 1 st paragraph regarding cellulitis – added: (<i>with an open wound</i>).	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	September 3, 2020	September 3, 2020
19	12-10-20	Annual Review. Updated ‘physician’ to ‘treating practitioner’. Per CMS: defined qualifying wound guidelines.	Lisa Wojno	Dr. C. Lerchin	December 2020	December 2020

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20	12-10-21	Annual review. Added NCD and LCD verbiage to “Important Note”. Revised National Pressure Ulcer Advisory Panel to National Pressure Injury Advisory Panel 2019 Revision.	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	December 10, 2021	December 10, 2021
21	3-2-22	Added Plan specific guidelines to paragraph 1 of coverage criteria.	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	March 2, 2022	
22	12-12-22	Annual review. No changes.	Lisa Wojno	Dr. C. Lerchin	December 12, 2022	December 2022
23	3-8-23	Added Diabetic Foot Ulcer Classification Systems and Wound Management Dressing Guide for HNE members. Added references.	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	3-8-23	3-8-23
24	12-18-23	Annual review. No further changes from March 2023.	Carol Dimech/Susan Glomb	Dr. C. Lerchin	12-18-23	December 2023
25	12-13-24	Annual review. Per CMS, added long descriptor to codes HCPCS A6531, A6532, A6545.	Carol Dimech	Dr. C. Lerchin	12-13-24	12-13-24