

**Blood (Whole, Components, & Derivatives)**

**Policy Number: ME0095**

**Active policy, not scheduled for routine review.**

**Definition:**

Whole blood and blood components (e.g., red cells, plasma, platelets and leukocytes) are used in the treatment of a wide variety of conditions. Blood derivatives (e.g., albumin, gamma globulin and prothrombin), likewise, are used in the treatment of several conditions and are often processed similarly to drugs.

**Coverage:**

Benefits are available for the collection, storage and transfusion of either blood or any one or more of its components in conjunction with a covered surgical procedure or a covered medical services.

Transfusion services are those services which are necessary to test blood and administer transfusions (e.g., blood, equipment, supplies, storage, administration, processing, typing and crossmatching) that are ordered by the physician.

Blood derivatives classified as formulary drugs are eligible for coverage as prescription drugs. (Refer To Medical Policy AD0528). Charges for transfusion services that obtain and deliver blood derivatives are eligible for coverage as supplies or laboratory services.

**Approval Procedures:**

Prior approval is not required.

**Limitations and Exclusions:**

1. Transfusion services for autologous blood and blood components in the absence of a covered medical or surgical procedure are not medically necessary and are ineligible for benefits.
2. Testing of autologous blood is not medically necessary if the blood is used by the donor.
3. Services associated with autologous blood that is not used by the donor but becomes part of an allogeneic transfusion are not covered. All costs associated with collection and subsequent transfusion should be passed on to the recipient.
4. No benefits are available for any services related to the collection of blood when its use in any manner is associated with an experimental/investigational medical or surgical procedure as determined by the Claims Processing Contractor.

**Authority:**

G.S. 135-40.1(1a)  
G.S. 135-40.1(7.1)  
G.S. 135-40.4(a)  
G.S. 135-40.6(1)n  
G.S. 135-40.6(1)q  
G.S. 135-40.6(5)b  
G.S. 135-40.6(8)a  
G.S. 135-40.6(8)g  
G.S. 135-40.6(8)h

**Reviewed:**

October 1997  
March 2005