



SMSNA

Sexual Medicine Society of North America, Inc.

Surgical and Non-surgical Treatments of Sexual Dysfunction Should be Standard Benefits of All Medical Insurance Programs

The Sexual Medicine Society of North America (SMSNA) believes that treatment of sexual dysfunction is an essential and necessary element of good healthcare and produces significant improvements not only in sexual function but also in overall health, work productivity and life satisfaction. SMSNA strongly supports the concept that all standard treatments for sexual dysfunction, including implantation of penile prostheses, should be covered by Medicare and other medical insurance programs.

Many good quality scientific studies clearly demonstrate the safety, efficacy and value of standard treatments of sexual dysfunction in men and women.

In general, medical insurance programs grant benefits for treatments that are medically necessary. Medically necessary services are often defined as treatments which replace, improve or restore a dysfunctional, missing or impaired body part. Examples of non-life-threatening conditions which are routinely granted medical insurance benefits are breast reconstruction after treatment for breast cancer, bariatric surgery for treatment of obesity, genital reconstructive surgery for treatment of transgender conditions and joint replacement for treatment of pain and disability due to arthropathy.

The most commonly treated sexual dysfunction is erectile dysfunction (ED). ED is not primarily a psychological problem although there are significant secondary psychological effects of ED. ED is usually a physical problem, which is very often caused by diabetes mellitus, treatments for prostate cancer, hypertension, dyslipidemia, vasculopathy, smoking and various forms of cardiovascular disease. There are several safe and effective treatments for ED due to these conditions. These treatments include oral therapy with PDE5 inhibitors, intracavernous injections, intraurethral prostaglandin, vacuum therapy and implantation of penile prostheses.



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SMSNA believes that treatments for ED, as well as other forms of sexual dysfunction, fit the definition of medical necessity and should be routine benefits of medical insurance programs. Treatment of sexual dysfunction is as deserving of insurance benefits as reconstructive breast surgery, transgender reconstructive genital surgery and other conditions which compromise quality of life. SMSNA believes that it is inconsistent for medical insurance benefits to be denied for treatment of sexual dysfunction, which may have a devastating effect on quality of life but granted for breast and genital reconstruction and other dysfunctions which are not life-threatening. When ED is due to prostate cancer treatments, diabetes mellitus and other underlying conditions, SMSNA strongly supports the provision of medical insurance benefits for all standard treatments, including implantation of penile prostheses.