



## Removal of a National Coverage Determination & Expansion of Coverage of Colorectal Cancer Screening

Related CR Release Date: January 27, 2023

MLN Matters Number: MM13017

Effective Date: January 1, 2023

Related Change Request (CR) Number: [CR 13017](#)

Implementation Date: February 27, 2023

Related CR Transmittal Numbers:  
[R11824CP](#), [R11824BP](#), and [R11824NCD](#)

Related CR Title: An Omnibus CR to Implement Policy Updates in the CY 2023 PPS Final Rule, Including Removal of Selected NCDs (NCD 160.22 Ambulatory EEG Monitoring) and Expanding Coverage of Colorectal Cancer Screening – Full Agile Pilot CR

### Affected Providers

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- Physicians
- Hospitals
- Ambulatory Surgical Centers
- Other providers billing Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) for services they provide to Medicare patients

### Action Needed

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Make sure your billing staff knows about:

- Removal of National Coverage Determination (NCD) 160.22 - Ambulatory Electroencephalographic (EEG) Monitoring
- Lowering the minimum age for colorectal cancer screening (CRC) from age 50 to 45 for certain tests
- Expanding the definition of CRC screening tests and new billing instructions for colonoscopies under certain scenarios
- Medicare manual updates

### Background

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#### NCD Removal

NCD 160.22 was effective on June 16, 1984. The NCD describes Ambulatory EEG monitoring as a diagnostic procedure for patients in whom a seizure diathesis is suspected, but not defined by history, physical, or resting EEG. In the CY 2023 Physician Fee Schedule (PFS) Final Rule, CMS removed NCD 160.22. In the absence of this NCD, your MAC will make coverage

determinations under Section 1862(a)(1)(A) of the [Social Security Act](#) (the Act).

## CRC Screening

Medicare coverage for CRC screening tests under Medicare Part B are described in statutes (Sections [1861\(s\)\(2\)\(R\)](#), 1861(pp), 1862(a)(1)(H), and [1834\(d\)](#) of the Act), regulation ([42 CFR 410.37](#)), and Section 210.3 of the [Medicare NCD Manual](#).

We're reducing the minimum age for coverage for the following CRC screening tests (HCPCS codes G0104, G0106, G0120, G0327, G0328, 81528, and 82270) from 50 years to 45 years of age or older:

- Screening Flexible Sigmoidoscopy Test
- Screening Guaiac-based Fecal Occult Blood Test (gFOBT)
- Screening Immunoassay-based Fecal Occult Blood Test (iFOBT)
- Screening The Cologuard™ – Multi-target Stool DNA (sDNA) Test
- Screening Barium Enema Test
- Screening Blood-based Biomarker Tests

Screening colonoscopy continues to **not** have a minimum age limitation. We aren't modifying existing maximum age limitations (where applicable).

Also, a positive result from a non-invasive stool-based CRC screening test no longer requires that the following colonoscopy be a diagnostic colonoscopy. CRC screening tests now include a follow-on screening colonoscopy after a Medicare-covered, non-invasive, stool-based CRC screening test returns a positive result.

We now understand both the non-invasive, stool-based test and the follow-on colonoscopy are both part of a continuum of a complete CRC screening. Patient cost sharing won't apply to the non-invasive, stool-based test and the follow-on screening colonoscopy in this scenario, because both are specified preventive screening services. The frequency limitations for screening colonoscopies in 42 CFR 410.37(g) won't apply to the follow-on screening colonoscopy that follows a positive result from a stool-based test.

Attach the KX modifier to a screening colonoscopy code to indicate such service was performed as a follow-on screening after a positive result from a stool-based test.

Our policy goal of not having frequency limitations to the follow-on screening colonoscopy after a non-invasive stool-based test returns a positive result is to remove barriers and encourage the patient to proceed to the colonoscopy procedure soon after the positive result from the stool-based test.

## More Information

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We issued CR 13017 to your MAC as the official instruction for this change. CR 13017 consists of 3 transmittals:

- Transmittal R11824BP updates the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual
- Transmittal R11824CP updates the Medicare Claims Processing Manual
- Transmittal R11824NCD updates the Medicare NCD Manual

For more information, [find your MACs' website](#).

## Document History

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Date of Change	Description
February 2, 2023	Initial article released.

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