

## Policy

EMHS Employee Health Plan (powered by Beacon Health) considers **Breast reduction and mastectomy for gynecomastia** medically necessary for the following indications:

### **Breast Reduction in the Female:**

Breast Reduction is considered reconstructive and medically necessary for members with symptomatic macromastia when *ALL* of the following criteria are met:

1. The amount of breast tissue anticipated to be removed is at least 350 grams per breast, or a total of 700 grams. Alternatively, for persons with small body habitus with a body surface area (BSA) equal to or less than 1.65, the estimated amount of breast tissue to be removed may be proportionally less, according to the Schnur Sliding Scale. Photographs must be submitted to confirm severe breast hypertrophy.
2. Documentation of a negative mammogram within the last two years for women over 40 years old.
3. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS) guidelines, two or more of the following associated symptoms are present for at least 12 months:
  - Documented history of upper back, neck and shoulder pain
  - Chronic breast pain due to weight of the breasts
  - Thoracic kyphosis, acquired
  - Documented history of recurrent or current intertrigo unresponsive to medical management (i.e. appropriate hygiene, appropriate prescription medications, appropriate professionally fitted support bra, etc.)
  - Shoulder grooving from bra straps
  - Headache
  - Backache, unspecified
  - Congenital breast deformity
  - Upper extremity paresthesia due to brachial plexus compression syndrome secondary to the weight of the breasts being transferred to the shoulder-strap area
  - For at least three months, the member has had on-going evaluations and failed conservative treatment for her symptoms by a PCP or a non-surgical specialist and chronic causes unrelated to the breast have been ruled out. Conservative therapeutic treatment may include the following measures: analgesics/non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) interventions, physical therapy, exercises, posturing maneuvers, appropriate support bra, wide bra straps, heat or cold application, etc.

### **Mastectomy for Male Gynecomastia:**

Surgery for unilateral or bilateral gynecomastia is considered medically necessary and therefore covered when *ALL* of the following criteria are met:

## PA.022- Breast Reduction and Mastectomy for Gynecomastia

Policy Number: PA-022  
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1. The member has pain and discomfort due to the distention and tightness from the hypertrophied breast which is refractory to medical treatment;
2. The member meets the ASPS classification of gynecomastia criteria for Grade II, III, or IV
  - Grade I: Small breast enlargement with localized button of tissue around the areola
  - Grade II: Moderate breast enlargement exceeding areola boundaries with edges that are indistinct from the chest
  - Grade III: Moderate breast enlargement exceeding areola boundaries with edges that are distinct from the chest with skin redundancy
  - Grade IV: Marked breast enlargement with skin redundancy and feminization of the breast
3. Breast tissue is glandular tissue (gynecomastia) and not excess fatty tissue as documented by physical examination;
4. Contributing factors for pathological gynecomastia have been treated for at least six months or have been ruled out;
5. Male is 18 years of age or older;  
**Note:** Surgery is generally not recommended until adult testicular size is attained, as there may be re-growth of the breast tissue if the surgery is performed before puberty is substantially completed (Tanner 5). If adult size is not attained by 18 years of age, genetic disorders need to be excluded.
6. If gynecomastia is induced by pharmacological agents, one of the following criteria must be met:
  - The member was taking prescribed medication that is believed to be contributory and gynecomastia has not improved within three months of stopping the offending agent;  
Or
  - The member is taking prescribed medications that are believed to be contributory but which cannot be discontinued because there is no alternative medication

### Limitations:

1. Breast Reduction is considered not medically necessary and therefore not covered for:
  - Members with breasts that are not fully developed
  - Members without persistent signs or symptoms
  - Breast Reduction performed solely for cosmetic purposes (improve self-esteem or appearance)
2. Experimental/Investigational
  - Breast Reduction or Mastectomy for Gynecomastia by Liposuction as the sole procedure is considered experimental/investigational
3. All other indications not listed above

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### Background

Reduction Mammoplasty is an intervention used for the treatment of macromastia. Macromastia, excessive breast size, is recognized as a medical condition that cause physical symptoms, including: pain in the neck, upper back and shoulders, chronic breast pain, frequent headaches, thoracic kyphosis, grooving of the shoulder due to bra straps, upper extremity paresthesia and difficulty sleeping and exercising. Reduction mammoplasty often performed in the outpatient setting, but may require a hospital admission.

Gynecomastia is a benign enlargement of the male breast due to hormonal imbalance (decreased testosterone and increase estrogen activity). This imbalance can occur at times of hormonal change, infancy, adolescence, or old age. Male breast growth can also be caused by medications, illicit drugs, physiologic changes, genetic disorders, and medical conditions which alter the balance of hormones.

### Codes:

CPT Codes	
Code	Description
19300	<i>Mastectomy for gynecomastia</i>
19318	<i>Reduction mammoplasty</i>

### References

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