



A Closer Look at: PET Scans

Recently, Chrysler, Ford and GM members have raised questions about PET scans, such as:

- Is preauthorization required? **Yes.**
- Are there diagnostic restrictions? **Yes.**
- Are scans payable that are considered experimental/investigational? **No.**

The benefit guidelines for each account are below:

Chrysler

- The PET scans must be medically necessary for the patient's condition.
- PET scans require preauthorization for non-Medicare members who reside in Michigan. The preauthorization review is conducted by AIM, a radiology management group.
- Experimental/investigational PET scan procedures are not a benefit. The scan must be approved.

Ford

- The PET scan guidelines as stated for the Chrysler account are the same for Ford.

General Motors

- Non-Medicare members and members who have Medicare

Part A only are required to obtain precertification.

- Diagnostic and place of service restrictions are in place for General Motors UAW Retirees.
- Experimental/investigational PET scan procedures are not a benefit. The scan must be approved.

For all 3 accounts, coverage of PET scan procedures is restricted to medically necessary and appropriate services to evaluate suspected or confirmed conditions. PET scans performed for screening purposes or those performed using experimental or non-FDA approved drugs, are not covered under the Program.

PET procedures are payable to a M.D. or D.O.

For UAW Retirees of Chrysler, General Motors and the Ford modified and catastrophic Plans, **cost share previsions apply.** For retirees enrolled in the Ford Protected Plan, eligible in-network PET scan claims are paid at 100%, but out-of-network claims are processed with required co-insurance application.

NOTE: UAW Retiree Medical Benefits (VEBA) is coming January 1, 2010. More information will follow as it becomes available.

HEALTH TIP:

Red hot relief?

Cayenne peppers (also known as red peppers) are small hot chili peppers that are usually used to season food. **Capsaicin**, a substance derived from these hot little red peppers, is often used as the active ingredient in arthritis cream because it creates a sensation of body heat when applied to the skin.

When used over time, capsaicin cream reduces the amount of "substance P," a chemical that relays the sensation of pain from the skin to the brain, thus relieving the pain itself. Capsaicin is considered a "natural" pain reliever. If you have arthritis, give capsaicin a try.

Capsaicin has also been found to have a dramatic effect in stopping the reproduction of prostate cancer cells.



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Recognize a stroke quickly

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke. The challenge is in getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed, and then getting the patient medically cared for within 3 hours, which is tough.

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions, or STR for short:

S – Ask the individual to smile.

T – Ask the person to talk and speak a simple sentence coherently, such as, “It is a sunny out today.”

R – Ask him or her to raise both arms.

A new sign of a stroke is this: Ask the person to “stick” out his tongue. If the tongue is “crooked,” if it goes to one side or the other, that is another indication of a stroke.

If he or she has trouble with any one of these tasks, call for emergency help (911) immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

Good news on Ambulatory Surgery Centers

Ambulatory Surgery Centers no longer require approval through the Auto approved network of freestanding ambulatory surgery centers (FASCs) in order to qualify for payment. All partner plans will be allowed to utilize their own respective participating network of FASCs for any Auto customer that they serve.