



Coverage of any medical intervention discussed in a WellFirst Health medical policy is subject to the limitations and exclusions outlined in the member's benefit certificate or policy and to applicable state and/or federal laws.

Auditory Brain Stem and Cochlear Implants

MP9016

Covered Services: Yes

Prior Authorization Required: No

Additional Information: None

WellFirst Health Medical Policy:

- 1.0 Cochlear implants for children **do not** require prior authorization and are considered medically necessary for infants or children 12 months of age or older when **ALL** of the following criteria are met:
 - 1.1 Bilateral sensorineural hearing loss with unaided pure-tone average thresholds of 70 dB or greater; **AND**
 - 1.2 Minimal speech perception 30% or less or lack of developmentally appropriate auditory milestones measured using parent report scales; **AND**
 - 1.3 No evidence of central auditory dysfunction or lack of cochlear nerve; **AND**
 - 1.4 Limited or no benefit from a three-month trial of appropriately fitted binaural hearing aids. This requirement is waived if radiological evidence of cochlear ossification is present or with history of pneumococcal meningitis as the cause of hearing loss.
- 2.0 Cochlear implants for adults **do not** require prior authorization and are considered medically necessary when **ALL** of the following criteria are met:
 - 2.1 Need for implant, as indicated by **1 or more** of the following:
 - 2.1.1 Bilateral sensorineural hearing loss of greater than 70 dB
 - 2.1.2 Less than 50% score on standardized open-set sentence recognition tests in ear to be implanted and less than 60% in contralateral ear when using appropriate fitted hearing aids

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- 2.2 Limited benefit from appropriately fitted binaural hearing aids
- 2.3 Intact cochlear nerve confirmed by CT or MRI, or acoustic neuroma excision planned, and cochlear nerve preservation thought possible
- 2.4 No lesions of acoustic nerve or central auditory pathway causing deafness
- 3.0 Cochlear implants are considered experimental and investigational, and therefore not medically necessary for the following indications: single-sided deafness, tinnitus, and auditory dyssynchrony.
- 4.0 Auditory brain stem implants for adults do not **require** prior authorization and may be medically necessary when **ALL** of the following are present:
 - 4.1 Post-linguistically deafened; **AND**
 - 4.2 Bilateral sensorineural hearing loss of greater than 70 dB; **AND**
 - 4.3 Zero or marginal speech perception benefit from hearing aid.
- 5.0 Auditory brain stem implants for children do not **require** prior authorization and may be medically necessary when **ALL** of the following are present:
 - 5.1 Age 12 months or older
 - 5.2 Bilateral sensorineural hearing loss of greater than 90 dB with minimal speech perception or severe delay in verbal language acquisition; **AND**
 - 5.3 Failure of all appropriate amplification and auditory training attempts.
- 6.0 Replacement or upgrade cochlear or auditory brain stem implants do not **require** prior authorization.



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