

MEDICAL POLICY STATEMENT Arkansas PASSE

Policy Name & Number	Date Effective
Breast Reduction Surgery-AR PASSE-MM-1587	06/01/2024-05/31/2025
Policy Type	
MEDICAL	

Medical Policy Statement prepared by CareSource and its affiliates are derived from literature based on and supported by clinical guidelines, nationally recognized utilization and technology assessment guidelines, other medical management industry standards, and published MCO clinical policy guidelines. Medically necessary services include, but are not limited to, those health care services or supplies that are proper and necessary for the diagnosis or treatment of disease, illness, or injury and without which the patient can be expected to suffer prolonged, increased or new morbidity, impairment of function, dysfunction of a body organ or part, or significant pain and discomfort. These services meet the standards of good medical practice in the local area, are the lowest cost alternative, and are not provided mainly for the convenience of the member or provider. Medically necessary services also include those services defined in any Evidence of Coverage documents, Medical Policy Statements, Provider Manuals, Member Handbooks, and/or other policies and procedures.

Medical Policy Statements prepared by CareSource and its affiliates do not ensure an authorization or payment of services. Please refer to the plan contract (often referred to as the Evidence of Coverage) for the service(s) referenced in the Medical Policy Statement. If there is a conflict between the Medical Policy Statement and the plan contract (i.e., Evidence of Coverage), then the plan contract (i.e., Evidence of Coverage) will be the controlling document used to make the determination. According to the rules of Mental Health Parity Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA), coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of a behavioral health disorder will not be subject to any limitations that are less favorable than the limitations that apply to medical conditions as covered under this policy.

Table of Contents

A. Subject.....	2
B. Background.....	2
C. Definitions	2
D. Policy	3
E. Conditions of Coverage.....	6
F. Related Policies/Rules.....	6
G. Review/Revision History.....	6
H. References.....	7

A. Subject

Breast Reduction Surgery

B. Background

Gynecomastia is the benign proliferation, either unilateral or bilateral, of glandular tissue of the breast in males. This develops most often in the setting of altered estrogen/androgen balance or increased sensitivity of breast tissue to estrogen. Causes may include androgen deficiency (eg, treatment for prostate carcinoma), congenital disorders (eg, Klinefelter Syndrome (47,XXY), medications (estrogen replacement therapy, calcium channel blockers, cimetidine, phenothiazines, spironolactone, theophylline, highly active antiretroviral therapy), chronic medical conditions (eg, cirrhosis, chronic kidney disease), tumors (eg, adrenal or testicular), or endocrine disorders (eg, hyperthyroidism). As a result of this hormonal imbalance, medication therapy may be offered in the treatment of gynecomastia (ie, anti-estrogens, androgens, or aromatase inhibitors).

Women diagnosed with macromastia (excessively large breasts) seeking breast reduction typically present with complaints of a feeling of heaviness, chronic pain, and tension in the neck, shoulders, and upper back. Macromastia commonly causes permanent grooving and ulceration of the shoulder following years of wearing support bras to try to minimize symptoms. The physical and psychological symptoms of macromastia can significantly and negatively impact an individual's life and should be taken into consideration when evaluating surgical intervention.

Reduction mammoplasty is a surgical procedure that reduces the weight and volume of the breast. As much as two to five pounds of excess breast tissue is routinely removed during a reduction mammoplasty. Indications for surgery include chronic pain and skin symptoms, neuropathy, breast discomfort, physical impairment, and psychological symptoms that can be associated with poor self-esteem and loss of desire to engage in activities.

C. Definitions

- **Body Surface Area (BSA)** – A metric used for physiologic measurements, pharmacologic dosing, as well as for therapeutic calculations, including the Schnur Sliding Scale for breast reduction surgery.
- **Cosmetic Procedures** – Procedures that correct an anatomical congenital anomaly without improving or restoring physiologic function are considered cosmetic procedures.
- **Functional/Physical or Physiological Impairment** – Impairment causing deviation from the normal function of a tissue or organ. This results in a significantly limited, impaired, or delayed capacity to move and coordinate actions, or perform physical activities and is exhibited by difficulties in one or more of the following areas: physical and motor tasks, independent movement, and performing basic life functions.

- **Intertriginous Rash** – Dermatitis occurring between juxtaposed folds of skin, caused by retention of moisture and warmth, and providing an environment favoring overgrowth of normal skin micro-organisms.
- **Kyphosis** – Over-curvature of the thoracic vertebrae (upper back) associated with degenerative diseases, such as arthritis, developmental problems, or with osteoporotic compression fractures of vertebral bodies.
- **Macromastia (Breast Hypertrophy)** – An increase in the volume and weight of breast tissue relative to the general body habitus.
- **Persistent Pubertal Gynecomastia** – The persistence of breast enlargement following the end of puberty and occasionally lasting into adulthood.
- **Post Pubertal Male** – Male who completes milestones for stage V in the Tanner stages.
- **Precocious Puberty in Males** – Onset of secondary sexual characteristics before the age of nine.
- **Pseudo-Gynecomastia** – Enlargement of the breast due to fat deposition (without glandular involvement), typically occurring in the setting of obesity.
- **Pubertal Gynecomastia** – A benign process occurring most commonly between the ages of 10 to 14, typically followed by regression in most cases.
- **Pubertal Male** – Onset of secondary sexual characteristics that is measured using the Tanner stages; puberty includes stages II, III, and IV.
- **Symptomatic Breast Hypertrophy** – A syndrome of persistent neck and shoulder pain, shoulder grooving from brassiere straps, chronic intertriginous rash of the infra-mammary fold, and/or frequent episodes of headache, backache, and upper extremity neuropathies caused by an increase in the volume and weight of breast tissue beyond normal proportions.
- **Schnur Sliding Scale** – An evaluation method promoted for use in calculating the amount of breast tissue to be removed in reduction mammoplasty (Appendix A).
- **Tanner Stages** – Sexual maturity rating of secondary sexual characteristics.

D. Policy

- I. CareSource considers breast reduction surgery for gynecomastia medically necessary when **ALL** of the following clinical criteria are met:
 - A. Member is 18 years or older (or 18 months after the end of puberty, whichever occurs last).
 - B. The tissue being removed is glandular breast tissues and not the result of obesity, adolescence, or reversible effects of drug treatment that can be discontinued. Documentation should be maintained in the medical record.
 - C. Documentation indicates any condition associated with gynecomastia (eg, androgen deficiency, chronic liver disease that causes decreased androgen availability, Klinefelter syndrome, adrenal tumors that cause androgen deficiency or increased secretion of estrogen, brain tumors that cause androgen deficiency, testicular tumors causing androgen deficiency or tumor secretion of estrogen, endocrine disorders such as hyperthyroidism).
 - D. Documentation supports that breast malignancy was ruled out.

The MEDICAL Policy Statement detailed above has received due consideration as defined in the MEDICAL Policy Statement Policy and is approved.

- E. The use of liposuction to perform breast reduction is considered investigational and is noncovered.
- II. CareSource considers breast reduction surgery for macromastia medically necessary when **ALL** the following clinical criteria are met:
 - A. Member is 18 years or older, or under 18 with documented evidence that breasts have finished growing for a minimum of one year (parental/guardian consent is required for members under age 18).
 - B. Breast size interferes with activities of daily living, as indicated by 1 or more of the following:
 - 1. arm numbness consistent with brachial plexus compression syndrome
 - 2. cervical pain
 - 3. chronic breast pain
 - 4. headaches
 - 5. nipple position greater than 21 cm below suprasternal notch
 - 6. persistent redness and erythema (intertrigo) below breasts
 - 7. restriction of physical activity
 - 8. severe bra strap grooving or ulceration of shoulder
 - 9. shoulder pain
 - 10. thoracic kyphosis
 - 11. upper or lower back pain
 - C. Preoperative evaluation by surgeon concludes that the amount of breast tissue to be removed (by mass or volume) will provide a reasonable expectation of symptomatic relief.
 - D. No evidence of breast cancer
 - 1. As evidenced by results of a physical exam completed by a physician within the last year if under 40 years of age.
 - 2. Women 40 to 54 years of age or older must have documentation of a mammogram negative for cancer performed within the year prior to the date of the planned breast reduction surgery.
 - 3. Women 55 years of age and older may switch to mammograms every 2 years.
- III. Breast reduction surgery following mastectomy to achieve symmetry is covered as part of the *Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act (WHCRA)*. Please refer to the available documentation on the CMS website for additional information.
- IV. Schnur Sliding Scale

The Schnur Sliding Scale is an evaluation tool used to determine the appropriate volume of tissue to be removed relative to a patient's total body surface area (BSA).

 - A. This estimation can be instrumental in determining whether breast reduction surgery is being planned for cosmetic reasons or as a medically necessary procedure. In a survey of plastic surgeons utilizing this scale, Schnur, et al (1991) determined that a member whose removed breast weight was above the 22nd percentile were likely to receive the procedure for medical reasons.

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- B. The weight of tissue to be removed from each breast must be above the 22nd percentile on the Schnur Sliding Scale (Appendix A below) based on the individual's BSA.
- C. The body surface area in meters squared (m²) is calculated using the Mosteller formula as follows:
 1. Square root of the result of height (inches) multiplied by weight (lbs.) and divided by 3131.

Appendix A: Schnur Sliding Scale

Body Surface Area and Minimum Requirement for Breast Tissue Removal	
Body Surface Area (m ²)	Grams per Breast of Minimum Breast Tissue to be Removed
1.350-1.374	199
1.375-1.399	208
1.400-1.424	218
1.425-1.449	227
1.450-1.474	238
1.475-1.499	249
1.500-1.524	260
1.525-1.549	272
1.550-1.574	284
1.575-1.599	297
1.600-1.624	310
1.625-1.649	324
1.650-1.674	338
1.675-1.699	354
1.700-1.724	370
1.725-1.749	386
1.750-1.774	404
1.775-1.799	422
1.800-1.824	441
1.825-1.849	461
1.850-1.874	482
1.875-1.899	504
1.900-1.924	527
1.925-1.949	550

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1.950-1.974	575
1.975-1.999	601
2.000-2.024	628
2.025-2.049	657
2.050-2.074	687
2.075-2.099	717
2.100-2.124	750
2.125-2.149	784
2.150-2.174	819
2.175-2.199	856
2.200-2.224	895
2.225-2.249	935
2.250-2.274	978
2.275-2.299	1022
2.300-2.324	1068
2.325-2.349	1117
2.350-2.374	1167
2.375-2.399	1219
2.400-2.424	1275
2.425-2.449	1333
2.450-2.474	1393
2.475-2.499	1455
2.500-2.524	1522
2.525-2.549	1590
2.550 or greater	1662

E. Conditions of Coverage
N/A

F. Related Policies/Rules
Breast Reconstruction Surgery

G. Review/Revision History

DATE		ACTION
Date Issued	02/28/2024	New policy. Approved at Committee.
Date Revised		

The MEDICAL Policy Statement detailed above has received due consideration as defined in the MEDICAL Policy Statement Policy and is approved.

Date Effective	06/01/2024	
Date Archived	05/31/2025	This Policy is no longer active and has been archived. Please note that there could be other Policies that may have some of the same rules incorporated and CareSource reserves the right to follow CMS/State/NCCI guidelines without a formal documented Policy

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