



FEP Medical Policy Manual

FEP 7.03.04 Isolated Small Bowel Transplant

Effective Policy Date: January 1, 2023

Original Policy Date: March 2012

Related Policies:

7.03.05 - Small Bowel/Liver and Multivisceral Transplant

Isolated Small Bowel Transplant

Description

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A small bowel transplant may be performed as an isolated procedure or in conjunction with other visceral organs, including the liver, duodenum, jejunum, ileum, pancreas, or colon. Isolated small bowel transplant is commonly performed in patients with short bowel syndrome. Small bowel/liver transplants and multivisceral transplants are considered in evidence review 7.03.05.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this evidence review is to determine whether the use of isolated small bowel transplant or retransplant improves the net health outcome in patients with intestinal failure.

POLICY STATEMENT

A small bowel transplant using cadaveric intestine may be considered **medically necessary** in adult and pediatric individuals with intestinal failure (characterized by loss of absorption and the inability to maintain protein-energy, fluid, electrolyte, or micronutrient balance), who have established long-term dependence on total parenteral nutrition (TPN) and are developing or have developed severe complications due to TPN.

A small bowel transplant using a living donor may be considered **medically necessary** only when a cadaveric intestine is not available for transplantation in an individual who meets the criteria noted above for a cadaveric intestinal transplant.

A small bowel retransplant may be considered **medically necessary** after a failed primary small bowel transplant.

A small bowel transplant using living donors is considered **not medically necessary** in all other situations.

A small bowel transplant is considered **investigational** for adult and pediatric individuals with intestinal failure who can tolerate TPN.

POLICY GUIDELINES

General Criteria

Potential contraindications for solid organ transplant subject to the judgment of the transplant center include the following:

- Known current malignancy, including metastatic cancer
- Recent malignancy with a high risk of recurrence
- Untreated systemic infection making immunosuppression unsafe, including chronic infection
- Other irreversible end-stage diseases not attributed to intestinal failure
- History of cancer with a moderate risk of recurrence
- Systemic disease that could be exacerbated by immunosuppression
- Psychosocial conditions or chemical dependency affecting ability to adhere to therapy.

Small Bowel-Specific Criteria

Intestinal failure results from surgical resection, congenital defect, or disease-associated loss of absorption and is characterized by the inability to maintain protein-energy, fluid, electrolyte, or micronutrient balance. Short bowel syndrome is 1 cause of intestinal failure.

Individuals who are developing or have developed severe complications due to total parenteral nutrition (TPN) include, but are not limited to, the following: multiple and prolonged hospitalizations to treat TPN-related complications (especially repeated episodes of catheter-related sepsis) or the development of progressive liver failure. In the setting of progressive liver failure, small bowel transplant may be considered a technique to avoid end-stage liver failure related to chronic TPN, thus avoiding the necessity of a multivisceral transplant. In those receiving TPN, liver disease with jaundice (total bilirubin >3 mg/dL) is often associated with the development of irreversible, progressive liver disease. The inability to maintain venous access is another reason to consider small bowel transplant in those who are dependent on TPN.

BENEFIT APPLICATION

Experimental or investigational procedures, treatments, drugs, or devices are not covered (See General Exclusion Section of brochure).

FDA REGULATORY STATUS

Solid organ transplants are a surgical procedure and, as such, are not subject to regulation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The FDA regulates human cells and tissues intended for implantation, transplantation, or infusion through the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, under Code of Federal Regulation Title 21, parts 1270 and 1271. Solid organs used for transplantation are subject to these regulations.

RATIONALE

Summary of Evidence

For individuals who have intestinal failure who receive a small bowel transplant, the evidence includes case series. Relevant outcomes are overall survival (OS), morbid events, and treatment-related mortality and morbidity. Small bowel transplant is infrequently performed, and only relatively small case series, generally single-center, are available. Risks after small bowel transplant are high, particularly related to infection, but may be balanced against the need to avoid the long-term complications of total parenteral nutrition (TPN) dependence. In addition, early small bowel transplant may obviate the need for a later combined liver/small bowel transplant. Transplantation is contraindicated in patients in whom the procedure is expected to be futile due to comorbid disease or in whom posttransplantation care is expected to worsen comorbid conditions significantly. Guidelines and U.S. federal policy no longer view (human immunodeficiency virus) HIV infection as an absolute contraindication for solid organ transplantation. The evidence is sufficient to determine that the technology results in an improvement in the net health outcome.

For individuals who have failed small bowel transplant without contraindication(s) for retransplant who receive a small bowel retransplant, the evidence includes case series. Relevant outcomes are OS, morbid events, and treatment-related mortality and morbidity. Data from a small number of patients undergoing retransplantation are available. Although limited in quantity, the available data have suggested a reasonably high survival rate after small bowel retransplantation in patients who continue to meet the criteria for transplantation. The evidence is sufficient to determine that the technology results in an improvement in the net health outcome.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Practice Guidelines and Position Statements

Guidelines or position statements will be considered for inclusion in 'Supplemental Information' if they were issued by, or jointly by, a US professional society, an international society with US representation, or National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Priority will be given to guidelines that are informed by a systematic review, include strength of evidence ratings, and include a description of management of conflict of interest.

American Gastroenterological Association

In 2003, the American Gastroenterological Association produced a medical position statement on short bowel syndrome and intestinal transplantation.³¹ It recommended dietary, medical, and surgical solutions. Indications for intestinal transplantation mirrored those of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The guidelines acknowledged the limitations of a transplant for these patients. The statement recommended the following Medicare-approved indications, pending availability of additional data:

- "Impending or overt liver failure...
- Thrombosis of major central venous channels...
- Frequent central line-related sepsis...
- Frequent severe dehydration."

American Society of Transplantation

In 2001, the American Society of Transplantation issued a position paper on indications for pediatric intestinal transplantation.³² The Society listed the following disorders in children as potentially treatable by intestinal transplantation: short bowel syndrome, defective intestinal motility, and impaired enterocyte absorptive capacity. Contraindications for intestinal transplant to treat pediatric patients with intestinal failure are similar to those of other solid organ transplants: profound neurologic disabilities, life-threatening comorbidities, severe immunologic deficiencies, nonresectable malignancies, autoimmune diseases, and insufficient vascular patency.

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendations

Not applicable.

Medicare National Coverage

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid have a national coverage determination on intestinal and multivisceral transplantation. The determination covers these types of transplants only when performed for patients who have failed TPN and only when performed in centers that meet approval criteria.

"1. Failed TPN

The TPN delivers nutrients intravenously, avoiding the need for absorption through the small bowel. TPN failure includes the following:

- Impending or overt liver failure due to TPN induced liver injury.
- Thrombosis of the major central venous channels; jugular, subclavian, and femoral veins.
- Frequent line infection and sepsis.
- Frequent episodes of severe dehydration despite intravenous fluid supplement in addition to TPN.

2. Approved Transplant Facilities

The criteria for approval of centers will be based on a volume of 10 intestinal transplants per year with a 1-year actutimes survival of 65 percent using the Kaplan-Meier technique."³³

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POLICY HISTORY - THIS POLICY WAS APPROVED BY THE FEP® PHARMACY AND MEDICAL POLICY COMMITTEE ACCORDING TO THE HISTORY BELOW:

Date	Action	Description
March 2012	New policy	
March 2013	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review. Added references 7 and 8; other references renumbered. No change in policy statements.
March 2014	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review. Added reference number 10; other references renumbered. Medically necessary policy statement added following a failed primary transplants.
September 2015	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review; references 5 and 12 added. Policy statements unchanged.
December 2017	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review through June 22, 2017; references 7-11, 14, and 28 added. Policy statements unchanged.
December 2018	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review through June 7, 2018; reference 26-27 added. Policy statements unchanged.
December 2019	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review through June 10, 2019; no references added. Policy statements unchanged.
December 2020	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review through June 24, 2020; references added. Policy statements unchanged.
December 2021	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review through June 14, 2021; no references added. Policy statements unchanged.
December 2022	Replace policy	Policy updated with literature review through June 9, 2022; no references added. Minor editorial refinements to policy statements; intent unchanged.

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