

Nutrition Counseling

Policy

Harvard Pilgrim reimburses nutritional counseling services provided by a contracted nutritionist or registered dietician when ordered by the member's PCP or participating provider.

Policy Definition

Medical Nutrition Therapy involves the assessment of an individual's overall nutritional status followed by an individualized course of treatment to prevent or treat medical illness. Nutritional counseling considers many factors including a person's food intake, physical activity, and course of any medical therapy including medications and other treatments, and individual preferences.

Prerequisite(s)

Applicable Harvard Pilgrim referral, notification and authorization policies and procedures apply. Refer to [*Referral, Notification and Authorization*](#) for more information.

HMO/POS/PPO

- A physician's order is required for all services, including tests

Open Access HMO and POS

For [*Open Access HMO and Open Access POS*](#) products, no referral is required to see a contracted specialist.

Harvard Pilgrim Reimburses¹

HMO/POS/PPO

- Nutritional counseling services for the purpose of disease management
- All covered diagnostic tests related to nutritional counseling that are ordered by the member's PCP and are rendered by a contracted provider
- Diabetes outpatient self-management training services when rendered by a certified diabetes health care provider
- Medical nutrition therapy performed by a *physician* when billed under evaluation and management or preventive medicine service codes
- Nutritionists should report the appropriate medical nutrition therapy code as necessary

Harvard Pilgrim Does Not Reimburse

HMO/POS/PPO

- Commercial diet plans, weight management programs or any foods or services related to such plans or programs²
- Gym membership programs²
- Holistic therapy
- Nutritional counseling when offered by health resorts, recreational programs, camps, wilderness programs, outdoor skill programs, relaxation or lifestyle programs, including any services provided in conjunction with, or as part of, such types of programs
- Supplemental foods
- Treatment by a physical therapist for weight loss

Member Cost-Sharing

Services are subject to member out-of-pocket cost share (e.g., copayment, coinsurance, deductible), as applicable.

Provider Billing Guidelines and Documentation
Coding³

Code	Description	Comment
0942	Other therapeutic services—education/training	CPT/HCPCS required
97802	Medical nutrition therapy; initial assessment and intervention, each 15 minutes	
97803	Medical nutrition therapy re-assessment and intervention, each 15 minutes	
97804	Medical nutrition therapy, group (two or more individuals), each 30 minutes	

Other Information

For medical nutrition therapy assessment and/or intervention performed by a physician or nurse practitioner, bill Evaluation and Management or Preventive Medicine service codes.

Related Policies
Payment Policies

- Certified Midwives, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants
- Diabetic Care
- Evaluation and Management
- Home Health Care

PUBLICATION HISTORY

09/01/00	original documentation
01/01/01	deleted benefit limitation
10/01/03	added CPT billing requirement for revenue code 942; clarified referral requirement
10/31/04	annual review; added billing for physician nutritional therapy services
08/01/06	annual review; added related policy Diabetic Care; minor edits for clarity
07/31/07	annual review; update to non-reimbursed services
07/31/08	annual review; update to non-reimbursed services
07/15/09	annual review; no changes
05/15/10	annual review; existing non-coverage holistic therapy added to “Harvard Pilgrim Does <i>Not</i> Reimburse”
05/15/11	annual review; no changes
01/01/12	removed First Seniority Freedom information from header
04/15/12	annual review; no changes
06/15/13	annual review; no changes
06/15/14	annual review; administrative edits; added <i>Connecticut Open Access HMO</i> referral information to Prerequisites
06/15/15	annual review; added clarification re: nutritionists
06/15/16	annual review; administrative edits
06/15/17	annual review; removed referral requirement
01/01/18	updated Open Access Product referral information under Prerequisites
06/01/18	annual review; no changes
06/03/19	annual review; no changes
06/01/20	annual review; updated language in Non-reimbursed Section from “Supplemental fasting” to “Supplemental foods”
06/01/21	annual review; updated provider billing guidelines

¹This policy applies to the products of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and its affiliates—Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of Connecticut, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of New England, and HPHC Insurance Company—for services performed by contracted providers. Payment is based on member benefits and eligibility, medical necessity review, where applicable, and provider contractual agreement. Payment for covered services rendered by contracted providers will be reimbursed at the lesser of charges or the contracted rate. (Does not apply to inpatient per diem, DRG, or case rates.) HPHC reserves the right to amend a payment policy at its discretion. CPT and HCPCS codes are updated annually. Always use the most recent CPT and HCPCS coding guidelines.

²Harvard Pilgrim offers discounts for weight control through Weight Watchers and other weight management programs and gym memberships. Contact Harvard Pilgrim Member Services at 888-333-4742 for information.

PAYMENT POLICIES

³The table may not include all provider claim codes related to nutritional counseling.