Podiatry

Policy
Harvard Pilgrim reimburses contracted providers for the provision of podiatry/foot care services related to the diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions for the foot and ankle. Services must be within the scope of the provider’s state practice laws and when the service is a covered benefit.

Policy Definition
Podiatry specializes in conditions and function of the foot and ankle in health and disease. It includes examination, diagnosis and treatment by medical and surgical methods.

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 referral is required for specialist services for HMO and in-network POS members.
• An authorization is required for miscellaneous DME (Refer to the Prosthetic and Orthotic Devices Payment Policy.)

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
Routine Foot Care
Routine foot care (i.e., cutting toenails, corn or callus removal) for member’s whose medical treatment or condition might impair circulation or sensation in the feet, or leave the member at significant risk for infection. This includes, but is not limited to, members with:
• Diabetes
• Lymphatic obstruction in the groin (Milroy’s disease)
• Peripheral vascular disease
• Prolonged (six weeks or more) low white blood cell count as a result of chemotherapy, acute leukemia, or aplastic anemia or significant immunosuppressing disease state that is not in remission
• Significant loss of sensation in the feet

Non-Routine Foot Care
• Bunionectomy
• Nail debridement
• Treatment of ingrown toenails
• Treatment of plantar warts

Medical/Surgical Treatment
• Reasonable and necessary medical and surgical services, including, but not limited to:
  − Incision and drainage of a simple, complicated or multiple abscess (e.g., carbuncle, suppurative hidradenitis, cutaneous or subcutaneous abscess, cyst, furuncle or paronychia).
  − Puncture aspiration of abscess, hematoma, bulla or cyst.
• Diagnosis or treatment for medical conditions that have resulted from or are with, partial displacement of structures of the foot.
• Treatment of subluxation of the foot, when it applies to medical or surgical treatment of subluxation of the ankle joint (talocrural joint).
• Other surgical procedures, as allowed by state practice laws, subject to Harvard Pilgrim’s Surgery Payment Policy.

**Harvard Pilgrim Does Not Reimburse**

**HMO/POS/PPO**

- Extracorporeal shock wave therapy; involving plantar fascia.
- Routine foot care for any other conditions than those listed under reimbursement.
- Services performed in absence of localized illness, injury or symptoms involving the foot.
- Simple trimming of the ends of the nails by cutting or grinding.

**Member Cost-Sharing**

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

**Provider Billing Guidelines and Documentation**

**Coding**

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<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28890</td>
<td>Extracorporeal shock wave therapy; including ultrasound guidance, involving plantar fascia</td>
<td>Not reimbursed</td>
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<tr>
<td>E1399</td>
<td>Miscellaneous DME supply or accessory</td>
<td>Authorization is required</td>
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**Related Policies**

**Payment Policies**

- Bilateral Services and CPT Modifier 50
- Diabetic Care
- Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
- Evaluation and Management
- Prosthetic and Orthotic Devices
- Surgery

**Clinical/Authorization Policies**

- New Technology Assessment and Non-Covered Services

**PUBLICATION HISTORY**

- 04/01/02 original documentation
- 07/01/03 annual review; minor edits
- 10/01/03 DME/orthotic billing information; minor edits
- 07/01/04 added extracorporeal shock wave therapy treatment not reimbursed
- 10/31/04 coding, non-covered services
- 01/31/06 coding update
- 08/01/06 annual review; added related policy Diabetic Care
- 07/31/07 annual review; minor edits
- 07/31/08 annual review: no changes
- 05/15/09 annual review; no changes
- 05/15/10 annual review; minor edits for clarity
- 05/15/11 annual review; no changes
- 01/01/12 removed First Seniority Freedom information from header
- 01/01/12 removed First Seniority Freedom information from header
- 04/15/12 annual review; minor edit for clarity
- 07/15/13 annual review; added E&M services statement under Does not Reimburse
- 06/15/14 added Connecticut Open Access HMO referral information to Prerequisites
- 07/15/14 annual review; added instructions for misc. DME
- 07/15/15 annual review; no changes
- 07/15/16 annual review; no changes
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<tr>
<td>01/15/17</td>
<td>annual coding update</td>
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<td>07/15/17</td>
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<td>01/01/18</td>
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<td>08/01/18</td>
<td>annual review; added related medical policies</td>
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<td>08/01/19</td>
<td>annual review; removed treatment, care or correction of flat foot from Harvard Pilgrim Does Not Reimburse</td>
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<td>08/03/20</td>
<td>annual review; updated Policy statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>08/02/21</td>
<td>annual review; updated provider billing guidelines; updated related policies and removed statement regarding E&amp;M and surgical services not reimbursed; removed DME/Orthotics section</td>
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1 This 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.

2 The table may not include all provider claim codes related to podiatry.