

Use of Imaging Studies for Low Back Pain (LBP)

Description of Measure

The percentage of members 18–75 years of age with a principal diagnosis of low back pain who did **not** have an imaging study (plain X-ray, MRI, CT scan) within 28 days of the diagnosis.

Measure Compliance

The number of members with a primary diagnosis of low back pain who did not have an imaging study within 28 days following the diagnosis (such as a plain X-ray, MRI or CT scan).

Note: This measure is reported as an inverted rate. A higher score indicates appropriate treatment of low back pain (e.g., the percentage for whom imaging studies did not occur).

Principal diagnosis of uncomplicated low back pain in an outpatient setting

Codes	Definition
ICD-10-CM: M47.26-M47.28, M47.816-M47.818, M47.896-M47.898, M48.061, M48.07, M48.08, M51.16, M51.17, M51.26, M51.27, M51.36, M51.360, M51.362, M51.369, M51.37, M51.370, M51.372, M51.379, M51.86, M51.87, M53.2X6-M53.2X8, M53.3, M53.86-M53.88, M54.16-M54.18, M54.30-M54.32, M54.40-M54.42, M54.5, M54.50, M54.51, M54.59, M54.89, M54.9, M99.03, M99.04, M99.23, M99.33, M99.43, M99.53, M99.63, M99.73, M99.83, M99.84, S33.100A, S33.100D, S33.100S, S33.110A, S33.110D, S33.110S, S33.120A, S33.120D, S33.120S, S33.130A, S33.130D, S33.130S, S33.140A, S33.140D, S33.140S, S33.5XXA, S33.6XXA, S33.8XXA, S33.9XXA, S39.002A, S39.002D, S39.002S, S39.012A, S39.012D, S39.012S, S39.092A, S39.092D, S39.092S, S39.82XA, S39.82XD, S39.82XS, S39.92XA, S39.92XD, S39.92XS	Uncomplicated Low Back Pain

Exclusions

Exclusions	Time limit
- Members who use hospice services or elect to use a hospice benefit - Members receiving palliative care - Members who die	Any time during measurement year (MY)



Exclusions	Time limit
- Members 66 years of age and older as of December 31 of the measurement year with frailty and advanced illness. Members must meet both frailty and advanced illness criteria to be excluded. - Frailty. At least two indications of frailty with different dates of service during the measurement year. Do not include laboratory claims (claims with POS code 81). - Advanced Illness. Either of the following during the measurement year or the year prior to the measurement year: - Advanced illness (Advanced Illness Value Set) on at least two different dates of service. Do not include laboratory claims (claims with POS code 81). - Dispensed dementia medication (Dementia Medication List).	Any time during measurement year (MY)
- Cancer, HIV, history of organ transplant, osteoporosis or spondylopathy. Do not include laboratory claims (claims with POS code 81). - Organ transplant, lumbar surgery or medication treatment for osteoporosis. - A dispensed prescription to treat osteoporosis	Any time during the member's history through 28 days after the IESD
IV drug abuse, neurologic impairment or spinal. Do not include laboratory claims (claims with POS code 81).	Any time during the 365 days prior to the IESD through 28 days after the IESD
Trauma or a fragility fracture. Do not include laboratory claims (claims with POS code 81).	Any time during the 90 days prior to the IESD through 28 days after the IESD
Prolonged use of corticosteroids.	90 consecutive days of corticosteroid treatment any time during the 366-day period that begins 365 days prior to the IESD and ends on the IESD.

Corticosteroid Medications

Prescription	Description
- Hydrocortisone - Prednisolone - Dexamethasone - Cortisone - Methylprednisolone - Betamethasone/ Betamethasone acetate - Prednisone - Triamcinolone	Corticosteroid

Osteoporosis Medications

Prescription	Description
- Alendronate - Risedronate - Abaloparatide - Romosozumab - Ibandronate - Zoledronic acid - Denosumab - Teriparatide - Alendronate- cholecalciferol	Bisphosphonates Other agents

Dementia Medications

Prescription	Description
- Donepezil - Galantamine - Rivastigmine	Cholinesterase inhibitors
Memantine	Miscellaneous central nervous system agents
Donepezil-memantine	Dementia combinations

Exclusion Codes

Exclusions	Time limit
HCPCS: G0182, G9475 - G9479, Q5003 - Q5008, Q5010, S9126, T2042 - T2046 CPT: 99377, 99378	Hospice Care
Malignant Neoplasms ICD-10-CM: C00.0-C00.6, C00.8, C00.9, C01, C02.0-C02.4, C02.8, C02.9, C03.0, C03.1, C03.9, C04.0, C04.1, C04.8, C04.9, C05.0, C05.1, C05.2, C05.8, C05.9, C06.0, C06.1, C06.2, C06.80, C06.89, C06.9, C07, C08.0, C08.1, C08.9, C09.0, C09.1, C09.8, C09.9, C10.0- C10.4, C10.8, C10.9, C11.0-C11.3, C11.8, C11.9, C12, C13.0, C13.1, C13.2, C13.8, C13.9, C14.0, C14.2, C14.8, C15.3, C15.4, C15.5, C15.8, C15.9, C16.0-C16.6, C16.8, C16.9, C17.0-C17.3, C17.8, C17.9, C18.0-C18.9, C19, C20, C21.0; C92.60, C93.92, C93.Z0, C93.Z1, C93.Z2, C94.00, C94.01, C94.02, C94.20, C94.21, C94.22, C94.30, C94.31, C94.32, C94.40, C94.41, C94.42, C94.6, C94.80, C94.81, C94.82, C95.00, C95.01, C95.02, C95.10, C95.11, C95.12, C95.90, C95.91, C95.92 C96.0, C96.2, C96.20, C96.21, C96.22, C96.29, C96.4, C96.5, C96.6, C96.9, C96.A, C96.Z Other Neoplasms ICD-10-CM: D00.00- D00.08, D00.1, D00.2, D01.0- D01.3, D01.40, D01.49, D01.5, D01.7, D01.9, D02.0, D02.1, D02.20-D02.22, D02.3, D02.4, D03.0, D03.10, D03.11, D03.111, D03.112, D03.121, D03.122, D03.20, D03.21, D03.22, D03.30, D03.39, D03.4, D03.51, D03.52, D03.59, D03.60, D03.61, D03.62, D03.70, D03.71, D03.72, D03.8, D03.9, D04.0, D04.10, D04.11, D04.111, D04.112, D04.12, D04.121, D04.122, D04.20, D04.21, D04.22, D04.30, D04.39, D04.4, D04.5, D04.60, D04.61, D04.62, D04.70, D04.71, D04.72, D04.8, D04.9, D05.00, D05.01, D05.02, D05.10, D05.11, D05.12, D05.80, D05.81, D05.82, D05.90, D05.91, D05.92, D06.0, D06.1, D06.7, D06.9, D07.0, D07.1, D07.2, D07.30, D07.39, D07.4, D07.5, D07.60, D07.61, D07.69, D09.0, D09.10, D09.19, D09.20, D09.21, D09.22, D09.3, D09.8, D09.9, D37.01, D37.02, D37.030, D37.031, D37.032, D37.039, D37.04, D37.05, D37.09, D37.1- D37.6, D37.8, D37.9, D38.0-D38.6, D39.0, D39.10, D39.11, D39.12, D39.2, D39.8, D39.9, D40.0, D40.10, D40.11, D40.12, D40.8, D40.9, D41.00, D41.01, D41.02, D41.10, D41.11, D41.12, D41.20, D41.21, D41.22, D41.3, D41.4, D41.8, D41.9, D42.0, D42.1, D42.9, D43.0-D43.4, D43.8, D43.9, D44.0, D44.10, D44.11, D44.12, D44.2-D44.7, D44.9, D45, D46.0, D46.1, D46.20, D46.21, D46.22, D46.4, D46.9, D46.A, D46.B, D46.C, D46.Z, D47.0, D47.01, D47.02, D47.09-D47.4, D47.9, D47.Z1, D47.Z2, D47.Z9, D48.0-D48.5, D48.60, D48.61, D48.62, D48.7, D48.9, D49.0, D49.1, D49.2, D49.3, D49.4, D49.5, D49.511, D49.512, D49.519, D49.59, D49.6, D49.7, D49.81, D49.89, D49.9	Cancer

Exclusions	Time limit
History of Malignant Neoplasm ICD-10-CM: Z85.00, Z85.01, Z85.020 Other Malignant Neoplasm of Skin ICD-10-CM: C44.00-C44.02	Cancer
ICD-10-CM: B20, Z21	HIV
History of Kidney Transplant ICD-10-CM: Z94.0 Kidney Transplant: CPT: 50360, 50365, 50380, HCPCS: S2065 ICD-10-PCS: 0TY00Z0, 0TY00Z1, 0TY00Z2, 0TY10Z0, 0TY10Z1, 0TY10Z2 Organ Transplant Other Than Kidney: CPT: 32850, 32851, 32852, 32853, 32854, 32855, 32856	Kidney / Major organ transplant
Diagnosis of osteoporosis ICD-10-CM: M80.XXXX- Age-related osteoporosis with current pathological fracture, unspecified site/specified body site, initial/ subsequent encounter/sequela for fracture (with routine healing, delayed healing, malunion, nonunion). Not all code in the M80 ICD-10-CM are listed. ■ [M81.0] Age-related osteoporosis without current pathological fracture ■ [M81.6] Localized osteoporosis [Lequesne] ■ [M81.8] Other osteoporosis without current pathological fracture	Osteoporosis
Osteoporosis therapy or a dispensed prescription to treat osteoporosis: HCPCS: J0897, J1740, J3110, J3111, J3489	
CPT: 22114, 22207, 22214, 22224, 22511, 22512, 22514, 22515, 22533, 22534, 22558, 22612, 22630, 22632, 22633, 22634, 22857, 22860, 22862, 22865, 22867, 22868, 22869, 22870, 62287, 62380, 63005, 63012, 63017, 63030, 63035, 63042, 63044, 63047, 63048, 63052, 63053, 63056, 63057, 63087, 63088, 63090, 63091, 63102, 63103, 63170, 63200, 63252, 63267, 63272, 63277, 63282, 63287 HCPCS: S2348, S2350 ICD-10-PCS Examples: [00BY0ZX] Excision of Lumbar Spinal Cord, Open Approach, Diagnostic [00CY0ZZ] Extirpation of Matter from Lumbar Spinal Cord, Open Approach [00NY0ZZ] Release Lumbar Spinal Cord, Open Approach [00QY0ZZ] Repair Lumbar Spinal Cord, Open Approach [00SY0ZZ] Reposition Lumbar Spinal Cord, Open Approach [0Q500ZZ] Destruction of Lumbar Vertebra, Open Approach [0Q800ZZ] Division of Lumbar Vertebra, Open Approach [0QH004Z] Insertion of Internal Fixation Device into Lumbar Vertebra, Open Approach [0QR03KZ] Replacement of Lumbar Vertebra with Nonautologous Tissue Substitute, Percutaneous Approach [0QU007Z] Supplement Lumbar Vertebra with Autologous Tissue Substitute, Open Approach	Lumbar surgery

Exclusions	Time limit
[0SG037J] Fusion of Lumbar Vertebral Joint with Autologous Tissue Substitute, Posterior Approach, Anterior Column, Percutaneous Approach [0SW4XKZ] Revision of Nonautologous Tissue Substitute in Lumbosacral Disc, External Approach Spondylopathy ICD-10-CM: M45.0, M45.3, M45.4, M45.5, M45.6, M45.7, M45.8, M45.9, M48.10, M48.13, M48.14, M48.15, M48.16, M48.17, M48.18, M48.19	Lumbar surgery
Neurologic impairment ICD-10-CM: G83.4, K59.2, M48.062, R26.2, R29.2 Spinal infection ICD-10-CM: A17.81, G06.1, M46.25-M46.28, M46.35-M46.38, M46.46-M46.48 Intravenous drug abuse ICD-10-CM: F11.10, F11.11, F11.120- F11.122, F11.129, F11.13, F11.14, F11.150, F11.151, F11.159, F11.181, F11.182, F11.188, F11.19, F11.20, F11.21, F11.220, F11.221, F11.222, F11.229, F11.23, F11.24, F11.250, F11.251, F11.259, F11.281, F11.282, F11.288, F11.29, F13.10, F13.11, F13.120, F13.121, F13.129, F13.130, F13.131, F13.132, F13.139, F13.14, F13.150, F13.151, F13.159, F13.180, F13.181, F13.182, F13.188, F13.19, F13.20, F13.21, F13.220, F13.221, F13.229, F13.230, F13.231, F13.232, F13.239, F13.24, F13.250, F13.251, F13.259, F13.26, F13.27, F13.280, F13.281, F13.282, F13.288, F13.29, F14.10, F14.11, F14.120, F14.121, F14.122, F14.129, F14.13, F14.14, F14.150, F14.151, F14.159, F14.180, F14.181, F14.182, F14.188, F14.19, F14.20, F14.21, F14.220, F14.221, F14.222, F14.229, F14.23, F14.24, F14.250, F14.251, F14.259, F14.280, F14.281, F14.282, F14.288, F14.29, F15.10, F15.11, F15.120, F15.121, F15.122, F15.129, F15.13, F15.14, F15.150, F15.151, F15.159, F15.180, F15.181, F15.182, F15.188, F15.19, F15.20, F15.21, F15.220, F15.221, F15.222, F15.229, F15.23, F15.24, F15.250, F15.251, F15.259, F15.280, F15.281, F15.282, F15.288, F15.29	Any time during the 365 days (1 year) prior to the IESD through 28 days after the IESD
Recent trauma ICD-10-CM: G89.11 and S codes for trauma/fractures Fragility fracture ICD-10-CM: M48.40XA, M48.40XD, M48.40XG, M48.40XS, M48.41XA, M48.41XD, M48.41XG, M48.41XS, M48.42XA, M48.42XD, M48.42XG, M48.42XS, M48.43XA, M48.43XD, M48.43XG, M48.43XS, M48.44XA, M48.44XD, M48.44XG, M48.44XS, M48.45XA, M48.45XD, M48.45XG, M48.45XS, M48.46XA, M48.46XD, M48.46XG, M48.46XS, M48.47XA, M48.47XD, M48.47XG, M48.47XS, M48.48XA, M48.48XD, M48.48XG, M48.48XS, M80.08XA, M80.08XD, M80.08XG, M80.08XK, M80.08XP, M80.08XS, M80.88XA, M80.88XD, M80.88XG, M80.88XK, M80.88XP, M80.88XS, M84.359A, M84.359D, M84.359G, M84.359K, M84.359P, M84.359S, M97.01XA, M97.01XD, M97.01XS, M97.02XA, M97.02XD, M97.02XS	

Strategies for Success

- Avoid ordering diagnostic studies in the first 4 weeks of new-onset back pain unless certain conditions are present.
 - Severe or progressive neurologic deficits (e.g., bowel or bladder dysfunction, saddle paresthesia)
 - Fever
 - Sudden back pain with spinal tenderness (especially with a history of osteoporosis, cancer or steroid use)
 - Trauma
 - Serious underlying medical condition (e.g., cancer).
- Educate the member on the reasons imaging tests are not warranted.
- Avoid opioids to treat common low back pain.
- Physical Therapy referral, including massage, stretching, strengthening exercises and manipulation

Resources

- I. National Committee for Quality Assurance, HEDIS® Measurement Year 2026 Volume 2 Technical Specifications for Health Plans