Appropriate Testing for Pharyngitis (CWP)

APPLICABLE LINES OF BUSINESS
- Commercial
- Medicare Advantage

MEASURE DESCRIPTION
Percentage of episodes for members three years and older where the member was diagnosed with pharyngitis, dispensed an antibiotic, and received group A streptococcus (strep) test for the episode.[i]

EXCLUSIONS
Patients are excluded if they:
- Had a claim/encounter with any diagnosis for a comorbid condition during the 12 months prior to or on the Episode Date.
- Had a new or refill prescription for an antibiotic medication filled 30 days prior to the Episode Date or was active on the Episode Date.
- Had a claim/encounter with a competing diagnosis on or three days after the Episode Date.
- Did not receive antibiotics on or up to three days after the Episode Date.
- Had a visit which resulted in an inpatient stay.
- Use hospice services or elect to use a hospice benefit any time during the measurement year.
- Died during the measurement year.

MEDICAL RECORDS
Patient medical records should include the performance of a rapid strep test or the patient's and/or caregiver's refusal of testing.

CODING

Type	Code	Description
ICD-10[ii]	J02.8, J02.9	Acute pharyngitis
ICD-10	J03.00, J03.01, J03.80, J03.81, J03.90, J03.91	Acute tonsilitis
ICD-10	J02.0	Streptococcal pharyngitis
CPT®[iii]	87070, 87071, 87081, 87430, 87650, 87651, 87652, 87880	Group A strep test

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Patient Care

Educate about viral infections

- Often patients or caregivers want an antibiotic to treat their symptoms even if they test negative for a bacterial infection. Explain that antibiotics are not effective on a viral infection and the unnecessary use of antibiotics can build up antibiotic drug resistance in the patient.
- Refer to their diagnosis as a sore throat due to a cold virus as patients tend to associate this label with a less-frequent need for antibiotics.

Educate about ways to treat symptoms

- Over-the-counter pain medications like non-steroidal analgesics and/or acetaminophen
- Cool-mist vaporizer and nasal sprays for congestion
- Eating ice chips
- Throat spray or lozenges for sore throats for older children and adults
- Extra rest and fluids

Educate about prevention

- Wash hands frequently
- Make sure healthy family members and sick family members aren't sharing eating utensils and drinking glasses
- Make sure toothbrushes don't sit next to each other in the same container
- Thoroughly wash an infected child's toys in hot water with disinfectant soap
- Keep a child with a sore throat out of school or daycare until they're fever free for 24 hours or until symptoms improve

Documentation and Coding

- Partner with your health plan payers to submit electronic data from your EMR.
- Document medical and surgical history in the medical record with dates in structured fields so your EMR can include these in reporting. This will allow the corresponding code to be included in electronic reporting, including claims, to health plans.
- Code for exclusions.

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[i] National Committee for Quality Assurance. HEDIS® Measurement Year 2024 Volume 2 Technical Specifications for Health Plans (2024), 114-118.

[ii] ICD-10 created by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), under authorization by the World Health Organization (WHO). WHO-copyright holder.

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