



**BlueCross BlueShield  
of Illinois**

# Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois Provider Manual

## HMO Scope of Benefits Section 2020

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

## Nutritional Services (Dietary Counseling)

### Benefit

Nutritional services, or dietary counseling, in the treatment of disease, injury or congenital abnormality, are covered.

### Interpretation

Nutritional services should part of a total treatment plan. Nutritional services can be broken down into three categories:

- **Medical need** - Nutritional services for the resolution or maintenance care of a condition resulting from a disease, injury, surgery, congenital or genetic abnormality or eating disorders are covered. Examples include: special diets for hypertensive and cardiac members; newly diagnosed diabetic members; post-gastro-intestinal surgery members; individuals with celiac disease or other malabsorption syndromes; members diagnosed with anorexia or bulimia. These members should be referred to a nutrition professional (physician, nurse, or registered dietitian) at the discretion of the Primary Care Physician. The number of visits should be based on medical necessity.
- **Obesity** - Because obese members are at higher risk for other disorders (cardiovascular disease, diabetes, back problems, gynecological disorders, etc.) they are candidates for nutritional counseling. The Primary Care Physician, who determines the number of visits, should refer these members to a nutrition professional. Members may be advised to attend Weight Watchers, TOPS, or other non-medical weight-loss programs. However, if the member is given a formal referral, the IPA becomes responsible for any charges.
- **Preventive nutritional counseling** - General nutritional counseling is normal member education which is done as part of a physical examination or routine visit. This counseling can be done by the doctor or by nursing staff. The IPA may charge for member-driven referral to other dietary personnel if there is no special medical need, but the member must be informed prior to receiving these services.

<b>Paid by</b>	Professional Charges	<b>IPA</b>
	Inpatient and/or Outpatient Surgical Facility Charges	<b>HMO</b>

**Note: See related benefits interpretations on Obesity and Diabetes Self-Management**