

CHAPTER 3
SECTION 1.1

COMPLICATIONS (UNFORTUNATE SEQUELAE) RESULTING FROM NONCOVERED SURGERY OR TREATMENT

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I. POLICY

Benefits are available for the otherwise covered treatment of complications resulting from a noncovered surgery or treatment when the complication represents a medical condition separate from the condition that the noncovered treatment or surgery was directed toward, AND treatment of the complication is not essentially similar to the noncovered procedure.

II. EXCLUSIONS

A. A complication is not covered when:

1. The complication occurs in the same body system or the same anatomical area of the noncovered treatment; and
2. The complication is one that commonly occurs.

B. Complications that are not covered when the result of a noncovered treatment include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Common complications such as local infections, defective wound healing, pain, and hypertrophic scars.
2. Complications from augmentation mammoplasty:
 - a. Breast asymmetry
 - b. Breast firmness
 - c. Extrusion of prosthesis
 - d. Hematoma
 - e. Nipple anesthesia
 - f. Scar contractures

- g. Serous extravasation
3. Complications from a noncovered rhinoplasty:
 - a. Bony framework deformities
 - b. Distortion of nose
 - c. Hematoma
 - d. Hemorrhage
 - e. Nasal tip and nostril deformities
 - f. Scar contracture
 4. Complications from a noncovered blepharoplasty:
 - a. Asymmetry
 - b. Dry eye syndrome
 - c. Ectropion
 - d. Enophthalmus
 - e. Hematoma
 - f. Inclusion cyst formation
 - g. Ptosis
 5. Complications from noncovered abortion (see also [Chapter 3, Section 13.6](#)):
 - a. Uterine perforation
 - b. Hemorrhage
 - c. Cervical laceration
 - d. D&C to remove retained placenta

III. EXCEPTIONS

Morbid obesity surgery. See [Chapter 3, Section 8.4](#).

IV. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A. A complication may be considered a separate medical condition when it causes a systemic effect, occurs in a different body system from the noncovered treatment, or is an

unexpected complication which is untoward based upon prior clinical experience with the procedure.

B. Untoward and unexpected complications that may be covered when occurring in a different body system than the noncovered treatment was directed toward, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Cardiac failure or arrest
- b. Hypovolemic shock
- c. Liver failure
- d. Phlebitis
- e. Pulmonary embolism
- f. Renal failure
- g. Respiratory insufficiency

C. Claims for treatment of complications not listed above should be referred for a medical review.

D. A claim falls under the provisions of [32 CFR 199.4\(e\)\(9\)](#) when complications are the result of treatment which was not a covered benefit at the time the services were provided whether or not a claim was processed by TRICARE for the noncovered procedure.

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