

---

**2023 Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan - FEP Blue Focus**  
**Section 5(b). Surgical and Anesthesia Services Provided by Physicians and Other**  
**Healthcare Professionals**  
**Page 58**

---

**Benefit Description**

**Surgical Procedures (cont.)**

Notes:

- **Benefits for the surgical treatment of morbid obesity are subject to the requirements listed below.**
- When the procedures are performed during an inpatient admission, precertification is also required, see page [19](#) for more information.
- **Prior approval is required for surgery for morbid obesity.** For more information about prior approval, please refer to page [20](#).

**Requirements for surgical treatment of morbid obesity:**

- Benefits for the surgical treatment of morbid obesity, performed on an inpatient or outpatient basis, are subject to the pre-surgical requirements listed below. **The member must meet all requirements.**
  - Diagnosis of morbid obesity (as defined on page [57](#)) for a period of 1 year prior to surgery
  - Participation in a medically supervised weight loss program, including nutritional counseling, for at least 3 months prior to the date of surgery. (Note: Benefits are not available for commercial weight loss programs; see pages [41](#) and [44](#) for our coverage of nutritional counseling services.)
  - Pre-operative nutritional assessment and nutritional counseling about pre- and post-operative nutrition, eating, and exercise

- Evidence that attempts at weight loss in the 1-year period prior to surgery have been ineffective
- Psychological clearance of the member's ability to understand and adhere to the pre- and post-operative program, based on a psychological assessment performed by a licensed professional mental health practitioner (see page [86](#) for our payment levels for mental health services)
- Member has not smoked in the 6 months prior to surgery
- Member has not been treated for substance use disorder for 1 year prior to surgery and there is no evidence of substance use disorder during the 1-year period prior to surgery
- Benefits for subsequent surgery for morbid obesity, performed on an inpatient or outpatient basis, are subject to the following additional pre-surgical requirements:
  - All criteria listed above for the initial procedure must be met again, except when the subsequent surgery is necessary to treat a complication from the prior morbid obesity surgery.
  - Previous surgery for morbid obesity was at least 2 years prior to repeat procedure
  - Weight loss from the initial procedure was less than 50% of the member's excess body weight at the time of the initial procedure
  - Member complied with previously prescribed post-operative nutrition and exercise program
  - Claims for the surgical treatment of morbid obesity must include documentation from the member's provider(s) that all pre-surgical requirements have been met

## You Pay

See previous page

---

*Surgical Procedures - continued on next page*

---

Go to page [57](#). Go to page [59](#).