

	Diagnostic Testing of Common Sexually Transmitted Infections	
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PROVIDER/ENTITY IMPACTED					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PROFESSIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FACILITY	<input type="checkbox"/> DME	<input type="checkbox"/> AMBULATORY SURGERY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAB	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

LINES OF BUSINESS IMPACTED						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLUE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACA QHP¹	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SMALL GROUP ACA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JAA²	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FEP³	<input type="checkbox"/> DENTAL

¹ ACA QHP: Affordable Care Act Qualified Health Plan for Individual/Family ² JAA: Joint Administrative Account ³ FEP: Federal Employee Program

Disclaimer

Blue KC has developed Provider Payment Policies to provide guidance on payment methodologies as they pertain to submitted claims. These policies are written following industry standard recommendations from sources such as:

- Current Procedural Terminology
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid
- American Medical Association
- National Correct Coding Initiative
- Other professional organizations and societies

Coverage of any service is determined by date of service, a member's eligibility and benefit limits for the service or services rendered, all terms of the Provider Service Agreement, and other standards of coding rules and guidelines.

Final payment is subject to the application of claims adjudication and edits common to the industry.

For confirmation of which services may be eligible for coverage and description of when medical services are considered medically necessary, not medically necessary, or investigational, please contact:

- Blue KC Provider Hotline for Commercial lines of Business 816-395-3929
- Affordable Care Act Provider Hotline 866-859-3822
- Blue Medicare Advantage Provider Hotline 866-508-7140

In the event of a conflict between any policies, the Member's coverage document will govern.

Description/Application

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs), often referred to as sexually transmitted diseases or STDs, include a variety of pathogenic bacteria, virus, and other microorganisms that are spread through sexual contact and can cause a multitude of

complications if left untreated. Chlamydia and gonorrhea, caused by *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*, respectively, have high rates of occurrence in the United States and can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), infertility, and pregnancy complications. The causative agent of syphilis is *Treponema pallidum*; if left untreated, syphilis can lead to serious cardiac and neurological conditions. Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a double-stranded DNA virus that can be sexually transmitted and is associated with cervical cancer, vulvar/vaginal cancer, anal cancer, oropharyngeal cancer, penile cancer, and both genital and nongenital warts. "Globally, anogenital HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection" with an estimated 80% of sexually active adults exposed to it at least once in their lifetime. Herpes simplex virus (HSV) is a common STI where many individuals are asymptomatic. HSV infection has been linked to an increased risk of other infections, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and in rare cases, can also result in HSV meningitis or proctitis. In general, risk factors for STIs can include both behavioral elements, such as multiple sex partners, working in a sex trade, and inconsistent use of condoms when in non-monogamous relationships as well as demographic risks, including men who have sex with men (MSM), prior STI diagnosis, admission to correctional facilities, and lower socioeconomic status.

This policy is limited to testing for *C. trachomatis*, *N. gonorrhoeae*, *T. pallidum*, *T. vaginalis* (for guidance on *T. vaginalis* (for guidance on panel testing for *T. vaginalis* in vaginitis, see AHS-M2057-Diagnosis of Vaginitis, HSV, and HPV. The following conditions and/or tests are discussed in the corresponding policies:

- Human Immunodeficiency Virus: AHS-M2116
- Hepatitis B and C: AHS-G2036-Hepatitis Testing
- Pediatric Preventive Screening: AHS-G2042
- Cervical Cancer Screening: AHS-G2002
- Pathogen Panel Testing: AHS-G2149

For STI screening in pregnant individuals, please see AHS-G2035-Prenatal Screening (Nongenetic).

Policy

Application of coverage criteria is dependent upon an individual's benefit coverage at the time of the request.

Antibody testing for syphilis infection **may be reimbursed** in the following situations:

- For any asymptomatic person in a high-risk category (see Notes 1 & 2), once a year assessment using either a "standard" or "reverse" algorithm that includes initial and confirmatory tests for any initial positive test, such as
 - Treponemal Ig test **and**
 - Nontreponemal Ig test.
- For diagnosis of any person presenting with signs and/or symptoms of a syphilis infection (see Note 3).
- Once every three months for HIV-positive men or MSM.
- Treponemal Ig testing and nontreponemal testing (once prior to transplant) as a part of a pre-transplant assessment in both donors and recipients of an allogeneic hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (allo-HCT).
- When a nontreponemal test is used as a test of cure (TOC) for a positive syphilis infection.

For asymptomatic individuals NOT belonging to a high-risk category (see Notes 1 & 2), antibody screening for syphilis **may be reimbursed** only in the following situations:

- As part of newborn screening.
- As part of follow-up in a victim of sexual assault.
- For sexually active individuals less than 18 years of age (annually).

Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing and nucleic acid amplification testing (NAAT) for syphilis **may not be reimbursed**.

Qualitative NAAT for chlamydia **may be reimbursed** in the following situations:

- Once a year assessment for any asymptomatic person in a high-risk category (see Notes 1 & 4).
- For diagnosis of any person presenting with signs and/or symptoms of a chlamydial infection (see Note 5).
- For the diagnosis of any person with suspected lymphogranuloma venereum (LGV).
- At least three months after the initial chlamydial diagnosis as a TOC.

For asymptomatic individuals NOT belonging to a high-risk category (see Notes 1 & 4), screening for chlamydia **may be reimbursed** only in the following situations:

- As part of newborn screening.
- As part of follow-up in a victim of sexual assault.
- For sexually active individuals less than 18 years of age (annually).

Serology testing for chlamydia or LGV **may not be reimbursed**.

Qualitative NAAT for gonorrhea **may be reimbursed** in the following situations:

- Once a year assessment for any asymptomatic person in a high-risk category (see Notes 1 & 4).
- For diagnosis of any person presenting with signs and/or symptoms of a gonorrheal infection (see Note 6).
- As a TOC for treatment.

For an individual that does not respond to initial treatment, culture testing for *N. gonorrhoeae* to determine antimicrobial susceptibility **may be reimbursed**.

For asymptomatic individuals NOT belonging to a high-risk category (see Notes 1 & 4), NAAT screening for gonorrhea **may be reimbursed** only in the following situations:

- As part of newborn screening.
- As part of follow-up in a victim of sexual assault.
- For sexually active individuals less than 18 years of age (annually).

Qualitative NAAT for *T. vaginalis* **may be reimbursed** in the following situations:

- For symptomatic individuals (see Note 7).
- Follow up testing a minimum of three months after initial trichomoniasis diagnosis
- Annual screening for symptomatic individuals belonging to a high-risk group (see Note 8).
 - Annual screening for asymptomatic individuals who have an HIV infection
 - As part of follow-up in a victim of sexual assault.

Rapid identification of Trichomonas by enzyme immunoassay **may not be reimbursed**.

For symptomatic individuals (see Note 8), testing for *Mycoplasma genitalium* using qualitative NAAT **may be reimbursed**.

For asymptomatic individuals (see Note 9), screening for *M. genitalium* using NAAT **may not be reimbursed**.

When an individual meets any of the conditions described above, multitarget PCR testing (targets limited to *C. trachomatis*, *N. gonorrhoeae*, *T. vaginalis*, and *M. genitalium*) **may be reimbursed**.

For individuals with active genital ulcers or mucocutaneous lesions, qualitative (NAAT) for herpes simplex virus-1 (HSV-1) or herpes simplex virus-2 (HSV-2) **may be covered**.

Immunoassay testing for HSV-1 and and/or herpes simplex (non-specific type test) **may not be reimbursed**.

Type-specific serologic testing for HSV-2 using a glycoprotein G2 (gG2) test **may be reimbursed** in the following situations:

- Recurrent or atypical genital symptoms or lesions in individuals with a negative herpes simplex virus PCR or culture result.
- For the clinical diagnosis of genital herpes in individuals with negative PCR or culture result or without laboratory confirmation.
- When an individual's partner has genital herpes.

In asymptomatic individuals, screening for HSV-1 or HSV-2 **may not be reimbursed**.

In the diagnosis and/or assessment of cancer or cancer therapy (immunohistochemistry testing for p16 or NAAT testing for high-risk human papillomavirus [HR-HPV]), testing for HR-HPV **may be reimbursed**.

Testing for HPV **may not be reimbursed** in the following situations:

- To screen for oncogenic high-risk types, such as HPV-16 and HPV-18, as part of a general sexually transmitted disease (STD) or sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening process or panel for asymptomatic individuals.
- As part of the diagnosis of anogenital warts.
- Testing for low-risk types of HPV.
- In the general population, either as a part of a panel of tests or as an individual NAAT to determine HPV status.

Prior to beginning a preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) regimen, tri0ple panel testing (hepatitis B surface antigen [HBsAG], hepatitis B surface antibody [anti-HBs], total antibody to hepatitis B core antigen [anti-HBc}) to screen for hepatitis B **may be reimbursed**

Prior to beginning or while an individual is undergoing a preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) regimen for HIV prevention, the following screens/tests for additional STIs **may be reimbursed**:

- Qualitative NAAT screening for gonorrhea and chlamydia:
 - Once every three months for MSM and for individuals with child-bearing potential.
 - Once every six months for sexually active individuals.
- Blood testing to screen for syphilis.
 - Once every three months for MSM
 - Once every 6 months for sexually active individuals
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The following does not meet coverage criteria due to a lack of available published scientific literature confirming that the test(s) is/are required and beneficial for the diagnosis and treatment of an individual's illness.

Direct Probe detection and/or quantitative NAAT for the following organisms **may not be reimbursed**:

- *Chlamydia trachomatis*
- *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*
- Herpes Simplex Virus-1
- Herpes Simplex Virus-2
- Human Papillomavirus
- *Treponema pallidum*

NOTES:

Note 1: For sexually active children and adolescents under the age of 18, risk factors for chlamydia, gonorrhea, and/or syphilis infection as defined by the CDC include: initiating sex early in adolescence; living in detention facilities; receiving services at STD clinics; being involved in commercial sex exploitation or exchanging sex for drugs, money, food, or housing; having multiple sex partners, having sequential sex partnerships of limited duration or concurrent partnerships; failing to use barrier protection consistently and correctly; having lower socioeconomic status, and facing numerous obstacles to accessing healthcare. At-risk individuals also include: males who have sex with males (YMSM); transgender youths; youths with disabilities, substance abuse, or mental health disorders.

Note 2: High-risk for Syphilis

- Sexually active men who have sex with men (MSM)
- Sexually active individuals with an HIV-positive status
- Having a sexual partner recently diagnosed with a STI
- Exchanging sex for money or drugs
- Individuals in adult correctional facilities
- During pregnancy when the following risk factors are present:
 - Sexually active HIV-positive status
 - Sexually active with multiple partners
 - Sexually active in conjunction with drug use or transactional sex
 - Late entry to prenatal care (i.e., first visit during the second trimester or later) or no prenatal care
 - Methamphetamine or heroin use
 - Incarceration of the woman or her partner
 - Unstable housing or homelessness

Note 3: Signs and Symptoms of a Syphilis Infection

- Chancre
- Skin rash and/or mucous membrane lesions in mouth, vagina, anus, hands, and feet
- Condyloma lata
- Secondary symptomology can include fever, fatigue, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes, weight loss, muscle aches, headache, and hair loss
- Signs and symptoms of neurosyphilis can include severe headache, trouble with muscle movements, muscle weakness or paralysis (not being able to move certain parts of the body), numbness, and changes in mental status (trouble focusing, confusion, personality change) and/or dementia (problems with memory, thinking, and/or making decisions).
- Signs and symptoms of ocular syphilis can include eye pain or redness, floating spots in the field of vision ("floaters"), sensitivity to light, and changes in vision (blurry vision or even blindness).
- Signs and symptoms of otosyphilis may include hearing loss, ringing, buzzing, roaring, or hissing in the ears ("tinnitus"), balance difficulties, and dizziness or vertigo.
- Signs and symptoms of late/tertiary syphilis include inflammatory lesions of the cardiovascular system (e.g., aortitis, coronary vessel disease), skin (e.g., gummatous lesions), and bone (e.g., osteitis).

Note 4: High-risk for Chlamydia and/or Gonorrhea

- Sexually active men who have sex with men (MSM)
- Sexually active individuals with an HIV-positive status
- Sexually active women under the age of 25
- Women age 25 or over who have multiple sexual partners
- Having a sexual partner recently diagnosed with an STI

- Previous or concurrent STI
- Exchanging sex for money or drugs

Note 5: Signs and Symptoms of a Chlamydia Infection

- Genital symptoms, including “discharge, burning during urination, unusual sores, or rash”
- Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID), including “symptoms of abdominal and/or pelvic pain, along with signs of cervical motion tenderness, and uterine or adnexal tenderness on examination”
- Urethritis
- Pyuria
- Dysuria
- Increase in frequency in urination
- Epididymitis (with or without symptomatic urethritis) in men
- Proctitis
- Sexually acquired chlamydial conjunctivitis

Note 6: Signs and Symptoms of Gonorrhea

- Dysuria
- Urethral infection
- Urethral or vaginal discharge
- Epididymitis (Testicular or scrotal pain)
- Rectal infection symptoms include anal itching, discharge, rectal bleeding, and painful bowel movements

Note 7: Signs and Symptoms of Trichomoniasis

- Vaginal or penile discharge
- Itching, irritation, a burning sensation, or soreness of the genitalia
- Discomfort or burning sensation during/after urination and/or ejaculation
- Urethritis
- Epididymitis
- Prostatitis

Note 8: High-risk for Trichomoniasis

- Receiving care in high-prevalence settings (e.g., STI clinics, correctional facilities)
- Having multiple sexual partners
- Exchanging sex for money or drugs
- Having a previous or concurrent STI
- Drug misuse
- History of incarceration
- Sexually active individuals with an HIV-positive status

Note 9: Signs and Symptoms of *M. genitalium* Infection

- When present, typical symptoms of *Mgen*-urethritis in men include dysuria, urethral pruritus, and purulent or mucopurulent urethral discharge
- When present, typical symptoms of *Mgen* cervicitis in women include vaginal discharge, vaginal itching, dysuria, and pelvic discomfort
- When present, typical symptoms of PID due to *Mgen* include mild to severe pelvic pain, abdominal pain, abnormal vaginal discharge, and/or bleeding

Coding	
CPT	Code Description
86704	Hepatitis B core antibody (HBcAb); total
86706	Hepatitis B surface antibody (HBsAb)
86780	Antibody; <i>Treponema pallidum</i>
87081	Culture, presumptive, pathogenic organisms, screening only
87110	Culture, <i>Chlamydia</i> , any source
87181	Susceptibility studies, antimicrobial agent; agar dilution method, per agent (eg, antibiotic gradient strip)
87340	Infectious agent antigen detection by immunoassay technique, (eg, enzyme immunoassay [EIA], enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay [ELISA], fluorescence immunoassay [FIA], immunochemiluminometric assay [IMCA]) qualitative or semiquantitative; hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)
87490	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> , direct probe technique
87491	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> , amplified probe technique
87492	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> , quantification
87528	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); Herpes simplex virus, direct probe technique
87529	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); Herpes simplex virus, amplified probe technique
87530	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); Herpes simplex virus, quantification
87563	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Mycoplasma genitalium</i> , amplified probe technique
87590	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> , direct probe technique
87591	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> , amplified probe technique
87592	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> , quantification
87623	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); Human Papillomavirus (HPV), low-risk types (eg, 6, 11, 42, 43, 44)
87624	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); Human Papillomavirus (HPV), high-risk types (eg, 16, 18, 31, 33, 35, 39, 45, 51, 52, 56, 59, 68) , pooled result
87625	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); Human Papillomavirus (HPV), types 16 and 18 only, includes type 45, if performed
87626	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); Human papillomavirus (HPV) separately reported high-risk types (e.g., 18, 31, 45, 51, 52) and high-risk pooled result(s)
87661	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); <i>Trichomonas vaginalis</i> , amplified probe technique
87797	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA), not otherwise specified; direct probe technique, each organism

87798	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA), not otherwise specified; amplified probe technique, each organism
87799	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA), not otherwise specified; quantification, each organism
87800	Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA), multiple organisms; direct probe(s) technique
87808	Infectious agent antigen detection by immunoassay with direct optical (ie, visual) observation; <i>Trichomonas vaginalis</i>
88341	Immunohistochemistry or immunocytochemistry, per specimen; each additional single antibody stain procedure (list separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
88342	Immunohistochemistry or immunocytochemistry, per specimen; initial single antibody stain procedure
88344	Immunohistochemistry or immunocytochemistry, per specimen; each multiplex antibody stain procedure
0064U	Antibody, <i>Treponema pallidum</i> , total and rapid plasma reagin (RPR), immunoassay, qualitative Proprietary test: BioPlex 2200 Syphilis Total & RPR Assay Lab/Manufacturer: Bio-Rad Laboratories
0065U	Syphilis test, non-treponemal antibody, immunoassay, qualitative (RPR) Proprietary test: BioPlex 2200 RPR Assay Lab/Manufacturer: Bio-Rad Laboratories
0096U	Human papillomavirus (HPV), high-risk types (ie, 16, 18, 31, 33, 35, 39, 45, 51, 52, 56, 58, 59, 66, 68), male urine Proprietary test: HPV, High-Risk, Male Urine Lab/Manufacturer: Molecular Testing Labs/Roche Cobas
0210U	Syphilis test, non-treponemal antibody, immunoassay, quantitative (RPR) Proprietary test: BioPlex 2200 RPR Assay - Quantitative Lab/Manufacturer: Bio-Rad Laboratories
0402U	Infectious agent (sexually transmitted infection), <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> , <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> , <i>Trichomonas vaginalis</i> , <i>Mycoplasma genitalium</i> , multiplex amplified probe technique, vaginal, endocervical, or male urine, each pathogen reported as detected or not detected Proprietary test: Abbott Alinity™ m STI Assay Lab/Manufacturer: Abbott Molecular, Inc
0455U	Infectious agents (sexually transmitted infection), <i>Chlamydia trachomatis</i> , <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> , and <i>Trichomonas vaginalis</i> , multiplex amplified probe technique, vaginal, endocervical, gynecological specimens, oropharyngeal swabs, rectal swabs, female or male urine, each pathogen reported as detected or not detected Proprietary test: Abbott Alinity™ m STI Assay Lab/Manufacturer: Abbott Molecular, Inc
0463U	Oncology (cervix), mRNA gene expression profiling of 14 biomarkers (E6 and E7 of the highest-risk human papillomavirus [HPV] types 16, 18, 31, 33, 45, 52, 58), by real-time nucleic acid sequence-based amplification (NASBA), exo- or endocervical epithelial cells, algorithm reported as positive or negative for increased risk of cervical dysplasia or cancer for each biomarker Proprietary test: Proofer '7 HPV mRNA E6 and E7 Biomarker Test Lab/Manufacturer: Global Diagnostics Labs, LLC, PreTect AS, a Mel-Mont Medical, Inc

0483U	Infectious disease (<i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i>), sensitivity, ciprofloxacin resistance (<i>gyrA</i> S91F point mutation), oral, rectal, or vaginal swab, algorithm reported as probability of fluoroquinolone resistance Proprietary test: Ciprofloxacin Susceptibility of <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i> Lab/Manufacturer: MedArbor Diagnostics, SpeedX, Inc
0484U	Infectious disease (<i>Mycoplasma genitalium</i>), macrolide sensitivity (23S rRNA point mutation), oral, rectal, or vaginal swab, algorithm reported as probability of macrolide resistance Proprietary test: Macrolide Resistance of <i>Mycoplasma genitalium</i> Lab/Manufacturer: MedArbor Diagnostics, SpeedX, Inc
G0499	Hepatitis b screening in non-pregnant, high-risk individual includes hepatitis b surface antigen (HBSAG) followed by a neutralizing confirmatory test for initially reactive results, and antibodies to HBSAG (anti-HBs) and Hepatitis B core antigen (anti-HBc)

References and Resources

Avalon Medical Policy AHS – G2157 – Diagnostic Testing of Common Sexually Transmitted Infections
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Related Documents

Avalon Medical Policy AHS - G2002 Cervical Cancer Screening
Avalon Medical Policy AHS – G2035 Prenatal Screening (Nongenetic)
Avalon Medical Policy AHS – G2036 Hepatitis Testing
Avalon Medical Policy AHS – G2042 Pediatric Preventive Screening
Avalon Medical Policy AHS – G2149 Pathogen Panel Testing
Avalon Medical Policy AHS – M2057 Diagnosis of Vaginitis
Avalon Medical Policy AHS – M2116 Human Immunodeficiency Virus

Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Revisions
001	07/01/2025	Initial version
002	10/01/2025	Avalon Quarterly update