

Subject: Antigen Leukocyte Cellular Antibody Testing (“ALCAT”)

Policy

As outlined in this policy, CareSource will not reimburse providers for Antigen Leukocyte Cellular Antibody Testing (“ALCAT”).

Definitions

“Antigen Leukocyte Cellular Antibody Testing” (“ALCAT”) food sensitivity/intolerance testing is a blood test that measures how white blood cells respond when exposed to different foods. (*CareSource internal definition.*)

Provider Reimbursement Guidelines

ALCAT employs semi-automated Coulter Electronics and fully automated computer analysis. Serum or whole blood testing for food intolerance or sensitivities has not been proven to be a valid, clinically reliable tool. Antigen Leukocyte Cellular Antibody Testing is a type of blood analysis for food sensitivity/intolerance which has had only limited, anecdotal clinical testing. Effectiveness studies for ALCAT have not met scientific rigor to validate its clinical usefulness. (See references below.)

ALCAT does not measure IgE mediated allergenicity similar to RAST, MAST or other clinically validated diagnostic testing for food allergies or intolerance.

CareSource considers blood testing for food sensitivity/intolerance, and specifically ALCAT testing, to be experimental and investigational and not medically necessary. Therefore ALCAT is not covered for food sensitivity/intolerance.

Related Policies & References

CareSource Experimental or Investigational Technologies policy.

Boyce JA, Assa'ad A, Burks AW, et al. Guidelines for the diagnosis and management of food allergy in the United States: Report of the NIAID-sponsored expert panel. *J Allergy Clin Immunol* 2010;126(6 Suppl):S1-5S8.

Wuthrich, B. Unproven techniques in Allergy Diagnosis. *J Investig Allergol Clin Immunol* 2005; 15:86-90

Mullin, Gerard E., et al. Testing for Food Reactions: the good, the bad, and the ugly. *Nutr Clin Pract* 2010, Apr 25 (2): 192-8

OAC 5160-4-28 Physician Services / Noncovered services

907 KAR 3:005. Physicians' services Section 4(10)(m) Service limitations.

State Exceptions

NONE

Document Revision History

10/31/2013 – OAC Rule renumbered from “5101:3-4-28,” per Legislative Service Commission Guidelines.

Archived