

2023 Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan - Standard and Basic Option
Section 5(b). Surgical and Anesthesia Services Provided by Physicians and Other Healthcare Professionals
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Benefit Description

Surgical Procedures (cont.)

- **Procedures to treat morbid obesity** – a condition in which an individual has a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 40 or more, or an individual with a BMI of 35 or more with one or more co-morbidities; eligible members must be age 16 or over. Benefits are available only for the following procedures:
 - Roux-en-Y gastric bypass
 - Laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding
 - Sleeve gastrectomy
 - Biliopancreatic bypass with duodenal switch

Note: Benefits for the surgical treatment of morbid obesity are subject to the requirements listed on pages [64-65](#).

Note: For certain surgical procedures, your out-of-pocket costs for facility services are reduced if you use a facility designated as a Blue Distinction Center. See pages [86-87](#) for information.

Note: **Prior approval is required for surgery for morbid obesity.** For more information about prior approval, please refer to page [22](#).

- 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 above) 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 [42](#) and [46](#) 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 [99](#) 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

Standard Option - You Pay

See page [63](#)

Basic Option - You Pay

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Surgical Procedures - continued on next page

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