

# Prostheses

## Devices

A prosthetic device replaces all or part of an internal body organ, such as:

- Cardiac pacemaker
- Prosthetic lenses (cataract surgery)
- Breast prosthesis (and surgical brassiere)
- Maxillofacial devices.

Dentures are not deemed to be a prosthetic device.

Replacement costs are not covered if the cost resulted from the failure, malfunction, etc. of the device itself. This expense is properly one of the device-manufacturer or provider.

Cataract Lens and Contact Cataract Lens. Cataract lens following natural lens extraction is medically necessary to compensate for missing lens and achieve normal vision. A contact cataract lens satisfies the definition of a covered prosthesis since it replaces missing part (lens), is attached to eyeball and is medically required to achieve normal vision.

Wigs. Wigs may be considered for payment as prostheses when prescribed by physician as necessary component of treatment for permanent disfigurement of scalp resulting from:

- Disease causing disfiguring or mutilating scars
- Mechanical violent trauma
- Thermal, chemical, or radiation burns
- Surgical treatment of neoplastic diseases.

## Artificial Limbs

A prosthetic appliance is defined as a device used to replace a natural part of the body which has been lost. Plans include coverage for the initial coverage for the initial purchase required to replace a natural body part lost while the claimant is covered by the plan. These plan provisions are liberalized administratively as outlined in the following guidelines.

Initial Purchase. The purchase of a prosthetic device is covered administratively whether it is an original or a replacement, if it is the first purchase made by a claimant while covered under the plan.

Subsequent Purchases. A prosthetic replacement is not covered when it is reasonable to assume that medical necessity was not a factor (i.e., the recent replacement

was purchased because it had superior enhancements over the old model). A replacement can be given consideration when it is shown that:

- Major growth of the user is a factor. (An example of this would be an adult who was fitted for an artificial leg as a child).
- Major pathological change has occurred at the affected site (e.g., an amputee who has had further amputation of the limb in question).

A statement of the reasons for a subsequent prosthetic appliance purchase should be obtained from the attending physician.