

## Medical Affairs Policy & Procedure

**Title/Service:** Laser Assisted Uvuloplasty (LAUP, Laser Assisted Uvulopalatoplasty, Somnoplasty)

<b>Revised</b>	
<b>Reviewed</b>	02/25/00, 06/17/03, 07/22/05, 08/25/06, 05/18/07, 05/15/08, 04/24/09, 04/28/10, 09/16/2011
<b>Developed</b>	02/25/00
<b>Policy Committee Approval</b>	09/16/2011

### **Description:**

Laser assisted uvuloplasty involves the use of a laser to remove all or part of the uvula and the surrounding soft palate tissues, usually for the treatment of sleep related disorders.

### **Indications of Coverage:**

None

### **Limitations of Coverage:**

- A. Review contract and endorsements for exclusions and prior authorization or benefit requirements. (For example, snoring alone is not an illness or injury, and treatments for snoring would not be covered. This procedure to reduce the size of the uvula maybe referred to as Somnoplasty).
- B. LAUP is considered investigational as there is insufficient peer-reviewed scientific literature documenting the effectiveness of the procedure.

### **Documentation Required:**

- Office notes
- Procedure report

### **Rationale:**

In 2010, the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) found that the evidence supporting the use of LAUP was of low quality. Additionally, the review found that LAUP does not generally correct the abnormal apnea-hypopnea index (AHI) findings,

and since there is no significant improvement with the procedure, LAUP cannot be routinely recommended.

**References:**

1. Aurora RN, Casey KR, Kristo D, Auerbach S, Bista SR, Chowdhuri S, Karippot A, Lamm C, Ramar K, Zak R, Morgenthaler TI. Practice Parameters for the Surgical Modifications of the Upper Airway for Obstructive Sleep Apnea in Adults. *Sleep*. 2010 Oct 1; 33(10):1408-13. Available at: [www.aasmnet.org/Resources/PracticeParameters/PP\\_SurgicalModificationsOSA.pdf](http://www.aasmnet.org/Resources/PracticeParameters/PP_SurgicalModificationsOSA.pdf). Accessed: 25 Aug 11.
2. Caples SM, Rowley JA, Prinsell JR, Pallanch JF, Elamin MB, Katz SG, Harwick JD. Surgical Modifications of the Upper Airway for Obstructive Sleep Apnea in Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Sleep*. 2010 Oct 1; 33(10):1396-407. Available at: [www.aasmnet.org/Resources/PracticeParameters/Review\\_SurgicalModificationsOSA.pdf](http://www.aasmnet.org/Resources/PracticeParameters/Review_SurgicalModificationsOSA.pdf). Accessed: 25 Aug 11.

*Approved by the Medical Director*