



## Corneal Collagen Cross-Linking Coverage

Effective May 1, 2024, Louisiana Medicaid allows for coverage of corneal collagen cross-linking (CXL) procedures.

CXL is a procedure used to treat progressive keratoconus. Keratoconus is a progressive ocular disease that increases the curvature of the cornea, leading to decreased visual sharpness. Ultraviolet (UV) light is combined with riboflavin eye drops to induce collagen crosslinks in the cornea, strengthening and stabilizing the cornea and delaying progressive deformation.

The CXL procedure, including the riboflavin drops and administration of UV light, is approved for patients between 14-20 years of age with progressive keratoconus.

### Clinical Guidelines

Coverage guidelines for CXL are following the Louisiana Medicaid program definition of medical necessity.

The guidelines are as follows:

- Epithelium-off photochemical CXL using riboflavin and ultraviolet A may be considered medically necessary for treatment of progressive keratoconus when conservative treatments (e.g., spectacles and contact lens) have been tried without success and the individual does not have either of the following contraindications: a corneal thickness of fewer than 400 microns or a prior herpetic ocular infection.
- Progressive keratoconus is defined as one or more of the following:
  - An increase of 1 diopter (D) in the steepest keratometry value or
  - An increase of 1 D in regular astigmatism evaluated by subjective manifest refraction or
  - A myopic shift (decrease in the spherical equivalent) of 0.50 D on subjective manifest refraction or
  - A decrease > 0.1 mm in the back optical zone radius in rigid contact lens wearers where other information was not available.

### Procedure Codes

CXL can be billed using the following codes:

- 0402T: collagen cross-linking of cornea (including removal of the corneal epithelium and measurement of corneal thickness).
- J2787: riboflavin 5'-phosphate, ophthalmic solution, up to 3 mL.

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan (UHCCP) will update their system to reflect the changes above within 30 days of this notification.

LDH has published Informational Bulletin 24-17 for your reference [IB24-17.pdf \(la.gov\)](#)

For questions or concerns regarding any bulletin, contact UnitedHealthcare Community Plan at 1-866-675-1607.