

## CHAMPVA POLICY MANUAL

**CHAPTER:** 2  
**SECTION:** 33.4  
**TITLE:** LITHOTRIPSY

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**AUTHORITY:** 38 USC 1713; 38 CFR 17.270(a) and 17.272(a)

**RELATED AUTHORITY:** 32 CFR 199.4(c)(2)(i)

**TRICARE POLICY MANUAL:** Chapter 3, Section 9.2

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### I. EFFECTIVE DATE

- A. December 19, 1984 for ESWL.
- B. September 30, 1983 for percutaneous lithotripsy.
- C. March 5, 1986 for transurethral urethroscopic lithotripsy.
- D. July 28, 1987 for transurethral urethroscopic lithotripsy using laser.

### II. PROCEDURE CODE(S)

- A. 50080-50081 - Percutaneous lithotripsy
- B. 50590 - Extracorporeal Shock Wave Lithotripsy (ESWL)

### III. DESCRIPTION

A. Percutaneous lithotripsy (or nephrolithotomy) is done by ultrasound, or by electrohydraulic or mechanical means. A probe is inserted through an incision in the skin directly over the kidney and applied to the stone. A form of lithotripsy is then used to fragment the stone. Mechanical or electrohydraulic lithotripsy may be used as an alternative or adjunct to ultrasonic lithotripsy.

B. ESWL is a non-invasive method of treating kidney stones using a device called a lithotripter. The lithotripter uses shock waves generated outside of the body to break up upper urinary tract stones. It focuses the shock waves specifically on stones under X-ray visualization, pulverizing them by repeated shocks.

C. Transurethral urethroscopic lithotripsy (transurethral nephrolithotomy) involves the insertion of an endoscope using an ascending approach through the urinary tract itself. The stone is then fragmented using either laser, ultrasound electrohydraulic techniques, or mechanical means.

#### **IV. POLICY**

The following lithotripsy techniques for the treatment of kidney stones are covered.

1. ESWL for use in the treatment of upper urinary tract stones.
2. Percutaneous lithotripsy (or nephrolithotomy) by ultrasound or by the related techniques of electrohydraulic or mechanical lithotripsy.
3. Transurethral urethroscopic lithotripsy (transurethral nephrolithotomy) using either laser, ultrasound, electrohydraulic techniques, or mechanical means.

#### **V. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

A. Any claims or inquiries received regarding payment for percutaneous lithotripsy performed between September 30, 1983 and March 15, 1985 (the previous effective dates of coverage for percutaneous lithotripsy), should be referred to:

CHAMPVA CENTER  
PO Box 65023  
Denver, CO 80206-5023

B. The CHAMPVA Center is not required to research their files for previously denied claims for transurethral urethroscopic lithotripsy using laser. If previously denied claims are brought to the attention of the CHAMPVA Center, the claims shall be reprocessed following the above policy.

**\*END OF POLICY\***