

# Vitamin B12 Testing

## Adjudication Guideline

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Medical

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## 1. Abstract

### 1.1 For Members

Vitamin B12 is mainly found in animal products such as meat, fish, milk, cheese, and eggs. It's also found in some fortified foods, such as breakfast cereals and yeast extract. Some people don't get enough vitamin B12 in the foods they eat, or they get plenty, but their body doesn't absorb it properly. This causes vitamin B12 deficiency.

You may be at risk if you:

- are vegan or vegetarian
- have had surgery on your stomach or bowels
- have had a condition called atrophic gastritis, which causes inflammation in your stomach
- have a condition such as Crohn's disease or coeliac disease that causes inflammation in your bowel
- are taking medicines that stop your body absorbing vitamin B12, such as anticonvulsants, acid blockers, proton-pump inhibitors, or metformin.

### 1.2 For Medical Professionals

Vitamin B12 deficiency classically presents with megaloblastic anaemia but can also present with neurological and neuropsychiatric complaints.<sup>2</sup> Older people, patients with chronic malabsorption, patients with a history of gastric resection or bypass, and those taking certain medicines (metformin, proton-pump inhibitors) are at risk. Early diagnosis is critical in preventing and halting the progression of neurological disorders such as peripheral neuropathy, sub-acute combined degeneration of the spinal cord, and dementia. Cause of vitamin B12 deficiency should be searched for once a diagnosis is confirmed.

The likelihood of vitamin B12 deficiency can be defined according to the serum vitamin B12 level as follows: 258 picomols/L (>350 picograms/mL) indicates that deficiency is unlikely.

## 2. Scope

The Scope of this adjudication rule highlights the medical indications and the coverage for diagnostic testing for vitamin B12 for all health insurance plans administered by DAMAN subject to policy terms and conditions.

## 3. Adjudication Policy

### 3.1 Eligibility / Coverage Criteria

Daman covers Vitamin B12 testing, if medically necessary for all health insurance plans administered by Daman to do vitamin B12 test is allowed for member with one or more of the following risk factors:

**Decreased ileal absorption:**

- Crohn disease
- Ileal resection
- Tapeworm infection
- Patients that have undergone bariatric procedures such as Roux-en-Y gastric bypass sleeve gastrectomy, or biliopancreatic diversion/duodenal switch

**Decreased intrinsic factor**

- Atrophic gastritis
- Pernicious anaemia
- Post gastrectomy syndrome

**Genetic:**

- Transcobalamin II deficiency

**Inadequate intake:**

- Alcohol abuse
- Patients older than 75 years or elderly individuals being evaluated for dementia
- Vegans or strict vegetarians (including exclusively breastfed infants of vegetarian/vegan mothers)
- Eating disorders

**Prolonged medication use:**

- Histamine H2 blocker use for more than 12 months.
- Metformin use for more than four months.
- Proton pump inhibitor use for more than 12 months.

### 3.2 Requirements for Coverage

- Failure to submit, upon request or when requesting a clinical history, and a blood film in presences of MCV reports will result in rejection of claim.
- ICD and CPT codes must be coded to the highest level of specificity.
- B12 testing to be ordered by a specialist
- Reimbursement for vitamin B12 testing is only allowed when performed no sooner than 2-3 months from initiation of treatment.

### 3.3 Non-Coverage

- Not covered for visitor plans.
- Will not covered for screening for vitamin B12 deficiency in health, asymptomatic members
- Will not covered for homocysteine testing for the confirmation of vitamin B12 deficiency.
- Vitamin B12 test cannot be ordered by a GP.

### 3.4 Payment and Coding Rules

- Please apply Regulator payment rules and regulation and relevant coding manuals for ICD, CPT, Frequency of services Etc.

## 4. Denial Codes

Code	Code Description
Code-10	Activity/diagnosis inconsistent with clinician speciality
MNEC-003	Service is not clinically indicated based on good clinical practice
MNEC-004	Service is not clinically indicated based on good clinical practice, without additional supporting diagnoses/activities
MNEC-005	Service /supply may be appropriate, but too frequent
CLAI-012	Submission not compliant with contractual agreement between provider and payer
PRCE-002	Service is included in another service paid
CODE-013	Invalid principal diagnosis (for example E-codes)

## 5. Appendices

### 5.1 References

- <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/afp/issues/2017/0915/p384.html>
- [https://www.uptodate.com/contents/clinical-manifestations-and-diagnosis-of-vitamin-b12-and-folate-deficiency?search=vitamin%20b12%20deficiency%20diagnosis&source=search\\_result&selectedTitle=1~150&usage\\_type=default&display\\_rank=1](https://www.uptodate.com/contents/clinical-manifestations-and-diagnosis-of-vitamin-b12-and-folate-deficiency?search=vitamin%20b12%20deficiency%20diagnosis&source=search_result&selectedTitle=1~150&usage_type=default&display_rank=1)
- <https://www.gov.nl.ca/labformulary/files/Vitamin-B12-Status-testing.pdf>
- <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/bjh.12959>
- <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng239/chapter/Recommendations#recognising-vitamin-b12-deficiency>

### 5.2 Revision History

Date	Change(s)
12/08/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• V1.0</li> <li>• Published</li> </ul>
31/12/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• V2.0</li> <li>• Reviewed as per the system requirement</li> <li>• Template Updated</li> <li>• References Updated</li> </ul>

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