GUIDELINES
This policy does not certify benefits or authorization of benefits, which is designated by each individual policyholder contract. Paramount applies coding edits to all medical claims through coding logic software to evaluate the accuracy and adherence to accepted national standards. This guideline is solely for explaining correct procedure reporting and does not imply coverage and reimbursement.

DESCRIPTION
Eustachian tube dysfunction (ETD) is the inability of the eustachian tube (ET) to ventilate the middle ear, drain secretions, or protect the middle ear from sounds or pathogens in the nasopharynx. The cartilaginous portion of the ET is the most likely source of pathology. ETD is associated with otologic and rhinology symptoms, including tinnitus (ringing in the ears), aural fullness, an inability to equilibrate middle ear pressure, a sensation of being underwater, impaired hearing, pain, and balance problems. Currently available treatments for ETD may be ineffective and do not correct the underlying obstructive nature of ETD.

Currently available treatment methods for ETD, including pharmacological treatment, mechanical devices, and nasal surgery (predominantly ventilation tubes and laser or microdebrader tuboplasty), may be ineffective and do not correct the underlying obstructive function of. In particular, ventilation tubes may require multiple insertions and lead to complications, including chronic perforation. Balloon eustachian tuboplasty has emerged as a method to improve physiological function of the ET.

Balloon dilation of the eustachian tube or balloon tuboplasty uses a modified catheter that is introduced inside the ET, using a special microendoscope to allow positioning. Once the catheter is introduced, the balloon located on its distal end is inflated by introducing saline solution. This pressure is kept unvaried for two minutes. Then, the balloon is deflated and the catheter is removed under endoscopic vision. The Aera Eustachian Tube Balloon Dilation System (Acclarent Inc.) is the first balloon device approved for ETD in the United States.

The EarPopper® is a non-invasive device for treating conditions such as otitis media with effusion, middle ear effusion, aerotitis/barotitis and eustachian tube dysfunction, without the need for surgery or antibiotics. The EarPopper® balances pressure in the middle ear by delivering a constant stream of air into the nasal cavity. During the moment of swallowing, the air opens the ET, clearing the middle ear, relieving negative ear pressure and allowing any fluids to drain.

There is not enough research to show that balloon dilation or the EarPopper® device improves health outcomes for people with ETD. No clinical guidelines based on research recommend balloon dilation or the EarPopper® device for ETD. Therefore, balloon dilation of the ET or the EarPopper® device is considered investigational for the treatment of any condition, including but not limited to eustachian tube dysfunction.

POLICY
Endoscopic balloon dilation of the eustachian tube (C9745) and the EarPopper device are non-covered.

HMO, PPO, Individual Marketplace, Elite, Advantage
Endoscopic balloon dilation of the eustachian tube (eg, Aera Eustachian Tube Balloon Dilation System, XprESS ENT dilation system) for any indication is considered experimental and investigational because of insufficient evidence of its effectiveness.

The EarPopper device for the treatment of otitis media with effusion and all other conditions (e.g., eustachian tube dysfunction and negative pressure as a consequence of elevation changes from airline travel, diving, and sinusitis surgery, etc.) experimental and investigational because of insufficient evidence of its effectiveness.

CODING/BILLING INFORMATION
The appearance of a code in this section does not necessarily indicate coverage. Codes that are covered may have selection criteria that must be met. Payment for supplies may be included in payment for other services rendered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HCPCS CODE</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>C9745</td>
<td>Nasal endoscopy, surgical; balloon dilation of eustachian tube</td>
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| CPT CODE |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------|
|          |
Unlisted procedure, middle ear

**TAWG REVIEW DATES:** 02/22/2018

**REVISION HISTORY EXPLANATION**

02/22/18: Endoscopic balloon dilation of the eustachian tube (C9745) and the EarPopper device are non-covered for all product lines. Policy created to reflect most current clinical evidence per The Technology Assessment Working Group (TAWG).

**REFERENCES/RESOURCES**

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS Manual System and other CMS publications and services
Ohio Department of Medicaid [http://jfs.ohio.gov/](http://jfs.ohio.gov/)
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System, HCPCS Release and Code Sets
Industry Standard Review
Hayes, Inc.