



2009

LUMBAR SPINE CT CRITERIA (MEDICARE)

MRI is the procedure of choice for evaluation of complex medical back problems such as infection, neoplasm, and architectural abnormalities. If a back study is not a critical determinant in treatment, for instance surgical intervention, the procedure should not be performed.

Lumbar spine CT is a covered benefit when:

- The patient can not have an MRI;

AND

When ***ONE*** of the following criteria is met:

- Symptoms greater than 6 weeks in the absence of objective neurological symptoms and failed 6 weeks of conservative physical therapy; ***OR***
- Focal neurological deficits indicating cord compression; ***OR***
- Trauma with suspected cord injury or neurological deficit; ***OR***
- Fracture fragments; ***OR***
- Myelopathy; ***OR***
- Metastases.