

Peptic Ulcer Disease

The treatment of ulcers has changed dramatically in the past two decades. With better identification of the causes and use of new medications, peptic ulcers typically respond to medical treatment. Surgical treatment is now rare. Ulcers occur when there is disruption of the protective lining of the inner stomach or when aggressive factors (like stomach acid) are increased. There are numerous contributing causes to ulcers, the most common of which are bacterial infection or the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines or both. Cigarette smoking, alcohol use, and steroids are also

contributors. Less than 1% of the total cases are due to Zollinger-Ellison Syndrome (Z.E.). Z.E. is caused by tumors in the pancreas gland, called gastrinomas, which secrete increased levels of gastrin and results in an over production of stomach acid leading to recurrent gastric ulcers. Medical treatment (including avoiding causative agents, blocking acid production, and antibiotics if required) will cure most ulcers. Multiple recurrences may be due to Z.E. Gastric ulcers are occasionally due to a malignant tumor, which ulcerates. Therefore, endoscopy (looking into the stomach) and biopsy (taking a piece of the tissue) should be done and the ulcer watched closely to insure that it heals completely. Ulcers that show no healing after 12 weeks may require surgery. Duodenal ulcer is a chronic recurrent disease, which is diagnosed by x-ray or endoscopy. The usual clinical course is spontaneous healing and recurrence. 60% will recur within 1 year and 50-90% in the second year. Duodenal ulcer therapy relieves symptoms and hastens healing. Surgery is only required for complications, such as bowel perforation (ulcer goes through the duodenal wall) or obstruction.

Underwriting Considerations for ulcer disease:

Duodenal Ulcer

One or two episodes well followed without complication, resolved 0

Gastric Ulcer

One or two episodes, biopsy negative for cancer resolved 0

One or two episodes, biopsy negative for cancer unresolved 55

Higher ratings may apply for more than 2 episodes or complications such as "dumping syndrome" or obstruction.

If your client has a history of Peptic Ulcer disease, please answer the following:

1. Please list date of diagnosis:

2. Please note how the ulcer was treated:

Medications only, please give details

Surgery only, please give date and type of surgery?

Was repeat surgery required?

Both _____

3. Have there been any recurrences or more than one episode?

yes, please give details

4. Is your client on any medications?

yes, please give details

5. Has your client smoked cigarettes or any other tobacco products in the last 5 years?

yes, please give details

6. Does your client have any other major health problems (ex: cancer, etc.)?

yes, please give details
