Medical Policy
Facet Arthroplasty

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Policy Number: 174
BCBSA Reference Number: 7.01.120 (For Plan internal use only)
NCD/LCD: N/A

Related Policies
• Artificial Intervertebral Disc: Lumbar Spine, #592
• Interspinous Distraction Devices (Spacers), #584

Policy
Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, and Indemnity
Medicare HMO BlueSM and Medicare PPO BlueSM Members

Total facet arthroplasty is INVESTIGATIONAL.

Prior Authorization Information
Inpatient
• For services described in this policy, precertification/preauthorization IS REQUIRED for all products if the procedure is performed inpatient.

Outpatient
• For services described in this policy, see below for products where prior authorization might be required if the procedure is performed outpatient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Outpatient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Managed Care (HMO and POS)</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial PPO and Indemnity</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicare HMO BlueSM</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicare PPO BlueSM</td>
<td>This is not a covered service.</td>
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CPT Codes / HCPCS Codes / ICD Codes
Inclusion or exclusion of a code does not constitute or imply member coverage or provider reimbursement. Please refer to the member’s contract benefits in effect at the time of service to determine coverage or non-coverage as it applies to an individual member.
Providers should report all services using the most up-to-date industry-standard procedure, revenue, and diagnosis codes, including modifiers where applicable.

The following codes are included below for informational purposes only; this is not an all-inclusive list.

The following CPT code is considered investigational for Commercial Members: Managed Care (HMO and POS), PPO, Indemnity, Medicare HMO Blue and Medicare PPO Blue:

CPT Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPT codes:</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>0202T</td>
<td>Posterior vertebral joint(s) arthroplasty (e.g. facet joint[s] replacement) including facetectomy, laminectomy, foraminotomy and vertebral column fixation, with or without injection of bone cement, including fluoroscopy, single level, lumbar spine</td>
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Description
Spinal fusion is a common surgical treatment following surgical decompression when conservative treatment fails. However, spinal fusion alters the normal biomechanics of the back, which may potentially lead to premature disc degeneration at adjacent levels. A variety of implants have been investigated as alternatives to rigid interbody or posterolateral intertransverse spinal fusion. This evidence review addresses the implantation of prostheses intended to replace the facet joints and excised posterior elements, termed facet arthroplasty.

The objective of facet arthroplasty is to stabilize the spine while retaining normal intervertebral motion of the surgically removed segment following neural decompression. It is proposed that facet arthroplasty should also maintain the normal biomechanics of the adjacent vertebrae. If normal motion patterns are achieved by artificial joints in the spine, the risk of adjacent-level degeneration thought to be associated with fusion may be mitigated.

Summary
Facet arthroplasty refers to the implantation of a spinal prosthesis to restore posterior element structure and function as an adjunct to neural decompression. This procedure is proposed as an alternative to posterior spinal fusion for patients with facet arthrosis, spinal stenosis, and spondylolisthesis.

For individuals who have lumbar spinal stenosis who receive spinal decompression with facet arthroplasty, the evidence includes a preliminary report of an otherwise unpublished randomized controlled trial (RCT), a planned interim analysis of an ongoing RCT, and a few case series studies. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, functional outcomes, quality of life, and treatment-related morbidity. Interim results from a pivotal trial of the ACADIA Facet Replacement System were reported in 2012. No additional publications from this trial, which was completed in October 2017, have been identified to date. Interim results from a pivotal randomized trial of the Total Posterior-element System (TOPS) indicated substantial improvement over transforaminal lumbar interbody fusion (TLIF) in multiple patient-reported outcomes related to functional status and symptoms up to 2 years post-operatively; the results further suggested relatively preserved range of motion at the treated vertebral level with TOPS versus TLIF, without increased risk of adverse events. No device has received U.S. Food and Drug Administration approval. The evidence is insufficient to determine that the technology results in an improvement in the net health outcome.

Policy History

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>6/2022</td>
<td>Annual policy review. Policy statements unchanged.</td>
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Information Pertaining to All Blue Cross Blue Shield Medical Policies
Click on any of the following terms to access the relevant information:

Medical Policy Terms of Use
Managed Care Guidelines
Indemnity/PPO Guidelines
Clinical Exception Process
Medical Technology Assessment Guidelines

References
1. Lurie J, Tomkins-Lane C. Management of lumbar spinal stenosis. BMJ. Jan 04 2016; 352: h6234. PMID 26727925