Acupuncture

Date of Origin: 06/2004  
Last Review Date: 01/27/2022  
Effective Date: 02/01/2022


Developed By: Medical Necessity Criteria Committee

I. Description
Acupuncture is one of the oldest, most commonly used medical procedures in the world. Originating in China more than 2,000 years ago, acupuncture became better known in the United States in the 1970’s. The general theory of acupuncture is based on the premise that there are patterns of energy flow (Qi) throughout the body which are essential for health. Disruptions of this flow are believed to be responsible for disease. Acupuncture may correct imbalances of flow at identifiable points close to the skin. Findings from basic research have begun to make clear the mechanisms of action of acupuncture, including the release of opioids and other peptides in the central nervous system and the periphery and changes in neuroendocrine function. Although research suggests some potential areas for the use of acupuncture, the quality or quantity of the research evidence is not sufficient to provide definite evidence of effectiveness at this time.

Note: Acupuncture is often excluded under many benefit plans. Refer to member handbook to determine benefit terms and availability.

II. Criteria: CWQI: HCS-0002
A. Moda Health will cover needle acupuncture (manual or electroacupuncture) when it is listed as a covered benefit and is administered by a healthcare provider who is a legally qualified acupuncturist practicing within the scope of his/her license for the following indications:
   a. Nausea and vomiting associated with:
      i. Postoperative nausea and vomiting
      ii. Chemotherapy
      iii. Pregnancy
   b. Postoperative dental pain
   c. Temporomandibular disorders
   d. As an adjunct to standard conservative therapy for chronic painful conditions
      i. Neck pain
      ii. Back pain
      iii. Osteoarthritic knee or hip pain
iv. Migraine or tension headache
   e. The requested course of treatment is for 10-20 treatments over two months.

B. The requested treatment is NOT for any of the following indications
   a. Point injections (Biopuncture) for any indication
   b. Auricular electrical stimulation of acupuncture points, ambulatory device including P-stim or E-Pulse.

C. Moda Health does NOT cover acupuncture for ANY of the following conditions after the first 20 visits because there is inadequate scientific evidence supporting the effectiveness of acupuncture compared with placebo, sham acupuncture or other modalities of treatment in these conditions
   a. Addiction
   b. AIDS
   c. Allergic Rhinitis
   d. Asthma
   e. Dermatologic conditions
   f. Fibrotic Contractures
   g. Glaucoma
   h. Hypertension
   i. Induction of Labor
   j. Infertility
   k. Lactation
   l. Menstrual Cramps
   m. Obesity
   n. Psychiatric Diagnoses
   o. Sensorineural Deafness
   p. Smoking Cessation
   q. Stroke Rehabilitation
   r. Tinnitus
   s. Urinary Incontinence

III. Renewal Criteria

A. Continued acupuncture treatment is appropriate with ALL of the following:
   a. Medical necessity review is performed after the 20th visit.
   b. There is documentation of significant improvement in symptoms.
   c. Continued acupuncture is NOT requested for preventive, supportive, or maintenance care if the patient’s symptoms are not improving or regressing.
   d. The treatment plan includes transition to home exercise program as appropriate

IV. Information Submitted with the Prior Authorization Request:

1. Chart notes documenting diagnosis
2. Prior treatment modalities if applicable
3. Original evaluation and progress notes from acupuncture provider including a treatment plan for continued therapy.
V. Applicable CPT or HCPC codes when criteria requirements are met:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97810</td>
<td>Acupuncture, 1 or more needles; without electrical stimulation, initial 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97811</td>
<td>Without electrical stimulation, each additional 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient, with re-insertion of needle(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>97813</td>
<td>With electrical stimulation, initial 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient.</td>
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<tr>
<td>97814</td>
<td>With electrical stimulation, each additional 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with the patient, with re-insertion of needle(s)</td>
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VI. CPT/HCPC Codes: Not covered

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<th>Codes</th>
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<tr>
<td>S8930</td>
<td>Electrical stimulation of auricular acupuncture points; each 15 minutes of personal one-on-one contact with patient</td>
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VII. Annual Review History

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<th>Review Date</th>
<th>Revisions</th>
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<td>Annual Review: Added table with review date, revisions, and effective date</td>
<td>03/1/2013</td>
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<td>01/2014</td>
<td>Annual Review: Added transition to home therapy or other conservative therapy</td>
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VII. References

• Lee A, Fan LTY. Stimulation of the wrist acupuncture point P6 for preventing postoperative nausea and vomiting. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2009;(2):CD003281
• Physician Advisors

Appendix 2 – Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

Medicare coverage for outpatient (Part B) drugs is outlined in the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual (Pub. 100-2), Chapter 15, §50 Drugs and Biologicals. In addition, National Coverage Determination (NCD) and Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) may exist and compliance with these policies is required where applicable. They can be found at: http://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/search/advanced-search.aspx. Additional indications may be covered at the discretion of the health plan.

Medicare Part B Covered Diagnosis Codes (applicable to existing NCD/LCD):

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