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AHC Interspinous Devices

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Clinical Indications for Procedure

- Current role remains uncertain. Based on review of existing evidence, there are currently no clinical indications for this technology. See Inappropriate Uses for more detailed analysis of the evidence base. (1)(2)(3)

Alternatives to Procedure

- Alternatives include(4)(5):
 - Lumbar discectomy or microdiscectomy, with or without fusion, for herniated disk
 - Lumbar laminectomy, with or without fusion, for spinal stenosis
 - Nonoperative measures, including(6):
 - Epidural corticosteroid injection. See Epidural Corticosteroid Injection for further information.
 - Patient education in self-management and exercise
 - Pharmacotherapy (eg, anti-inflammatory medications)(7)(8)(9)
 - Physical therapy. See Spine Soft Tissue Dysfunction Rehabilitation for further information.
 - Spinal manipulation therapy. See Spinal Manipulation Therapy (SMT), Chiropractic and Other for further information.

Evidence Summary

Background

Interspinous distraction devices, such as the Wallis, X-Stop, Coflex, DIAM, Aperius, and Superior devices, are spacers placed between vertebral levels to limit extension without affecting flexion, axial rotation, or lateral bending. They reduce intradiskal pressure and facet load, and they prevent narrowing of the spinal canal and neural foramen. Proposed applications include relief of diskogenic low back pain and neurogenic claudication due to spinal stenosis.(10)(11)(12)(13)(EG 2)

Interlaminar lumbar instrumented fusion (ILIF), utilizing an interspinous process fusion device, has been proposed as an alternative to traditional fusion procedures. Devices used for ILIF are interlaminar or interspinous fixation devices, rather than traditional hardware (ie, plates, screws or cages). These devices are described as non-pedicle supplemental fixation systems and are attached to the spinous processes of adjoining vertebrae. They differ from interspinous process decompression spacers and nonrigid spinal stabilization

devices in that they are intended to be used as an adjunct to interbody vertebral fusion and allow the use of a bone graft (or bone graft substitute), rather than stand-alone procedures. **Examples of these devices include, but may not be limited to, the Alpine XC, Aspen MIS Fusion System, Aurora Zip MIS Interspinous Fusion System, BacFus, coflex-F, InSpan Spinous Process Plate System, PrimaLOK SP, SP-Fix and StabiLink MIS Spinal Fixation System.**(14)(15)(16)(17)(18)(19)(20)(21)

Committee Approval

- 01/09/2024, 02/20/2025

Application

- This policy applies to the following states: Arizona, California, Nevada, North Carolina, and Texas.
- Please refer to the CMS website for the most current applicable National Coverage Determination (NCD)/ Local Coverage Determination (LCD)/Local Coverage Article (LCA)/CMS Online Manual System/Transmittals.

Policy Revision History

- 06/05/2023, 10/31/2023, 12/11/2023: Revision
- 11/12/2024: Annual review, Applicable states updated, Florida removed.

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Codes

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