



MEDICAL COVERAGE GUIDELINES  
SECTION: MEDICINE

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/11/06  
LAST REVIEW DATE: 10/16/18  
LAST CRITERIA REVISION DATE: 12/20/16  
ARCHIVE DATE:

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## TILT TABLE TESTING FOR THE EVALUATION OF SYNCOPE

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Non-Discrimination Statement and Multi-Language Interpreter Services information are located at the end of this document.

Coverage for services, procedures, medical devices and drugs are dependent upon benefit eligibility as outlined in the member's specific benefit plan. This Medical Coverage Guideline must be read in its entirety to determine coverage eligibility, if any.

This Medical Coverage Guideline provides information related to coverage determinations only and does not imply that a service or treatment is clinically appropriate or inappropriate. The provider and the member are responsible for all decisions regarding the appropriateness of care. Providers should provide BCBSAZ complete medical rationale when requesting any exceptions to these guidelines.

The section identified as "Description" defines or describes a service, procedure, medical device or drug and is in no way intended as a statement of medical necessity and/or coverage.

The section identified as "Criteria" defines criteria to determine whether a service, procedure, medical device or drug is considered medically necessary or experimental or investigational.

State or federal mandates, e.g., FEP program, may dictate that any drug, device or biological product approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may not be considered experimental or investigational and thus the drug, device or biological product may be assessed only on the basis of medical necessity.

Medical Coverage Guidelines are subject to change as new information becomes available.

For purposes of this Medical Coverage Guideline, the terms "experimental" and "investigational" are considered to be interchangeable.

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### Description:

The tilt table test is used for the evaluation of recurrent episodes of unexplained syncope (fainting spells) in individuals with an inconclusive history and physical exam and negative cardiac and neurological tests. By attempting to induce an episode of syncope, the cause of the fainting spells can be determined to be vasovagal (relating to blood vessels and the vagus nerve) or malignant. In less than 10 seconds, the tilt table changes an individual's position from 0-60 degrees where they are held for an extended period of time. An abnormal response is a drop in heart rate and blood pressure resulting in vasovagal syncope. A normal response is an increase in heart rate and blood pressure.

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## **TILT TABLE TESTING FOR THE EVALUATION OF SYNCOPE (cont.)**

### **Definitions:**

#### Postural Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS):

POTS is a form of orthostatic intolerance characterized by an excessive increase in heart rate that occurs on standing without arterial hypotension.

#### Vasovagal Syncope:

Also known as neurocardiogenic or neurally-mediated syncope. A transient loss of consciousness accompanied by loss of postural tone. Tends to occur while standing or sitting, and is associated with prodromal symptoms, such as dizziness, diaphoresis, nausea and weakness, or a “flushed feeling”.

#### Malignant Syncope:

Syncope that may be caused by a heart arrhythmia or flutter and cannot be reproduced by a tilt table test.

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### **Criteria:**

**For autonomic nervous system testing, see BCBSAZ Medical Coverage Guideline #O940, “Autonomic Nervous System Testing”.**

- Tilt table testing for **ANY** of the following is considered **medically necessary** for the evaluation of syncope in which the clinical history supports a diagnosis of vasovagal syncope (i.e., no evidence of structural cardiovascular disease or structural cardiovascular disease is present but other causes of syncope have been excluded):
  1. Recurrent episodes of syncope
  2. Single episode of syncope
    - Accompanied by physical injury/accident, **OR**
    - Occurring in a high risk setting<sup>1</sup>
  3. Further evaluation of syncope in which an apparent cause has been identified (e.g., asystole or atrioventricular block) but the finding of a vasovagal syncope susceptibility would affect the treatment plan (e.g., pharmacologic therapy, education, reassurance instead of or in conjunction with implantable pacemaker therapy)
  4. Exercise-induced or exercise-associated syncope
  5. To evaluate the therapeutic effect of pharmacologic therapy in the treatment of vasovagal syncope
  6. Evaluation of the need for other interventions (e.g., pacemaker)
  7. As part of a diagnostic workup for individual with suspected POTS

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## **TILT TABLE TESTING FOR THE EVALUATION OF SYNCOPE (cont.)**

### **Criteria: (cont.)**

- Tilt table testing for the following indications or if above criteria not met is considered ***experimental or investigational*** based upon:

1. Insufficient scientific evidence to permit conclusions concerning the effect on health outcomes, and
2. Insufficient evidence to support improvement of the net health outcome

These indications include, *but are not limited to:*

- Benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV)
- Single episode of syncope without physical injury/accident or not occurring in a high risk setting in which the clinical history supports a diagnosis of vasovagal syncope
- Syncope in which an apparent cause has been identified but the finding of a susceptibility to vasovagal syncope would not affect treatment plans
- Identifying chronic fatigue syndrome diagnosis

- <sup>1</sup> Examples of high risk – commercial vehicle driver, machine operator, pilot, commercial painter, surgeon, window washer, competitive athlete.

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### **Resources:**

**Literature reviewed 10/10/17. We do not include marketing materials, poster boards and non-published literature in our review.**

**The BCBS Association Medical Policy Reference Manual (MPRM) policy is included in our guideline review. References cited in the MPRM policy are not duplicated on this guideline.**

1. 2.01.09 BCBS Association Medical Policy Reference Manual. Tilt Table. Re-issue date 11/11/2010, issue date 12/01/1995.
2. Benditt DG, Ferguson DW, Grubb BP, et al. Tilt table testing for assessing syncope. American College of Cardiology. *J Am Coll Cardiol.* 1996 Jul 1996;28(1):263-275.
3. Freeman R, Kaufmann H. Postural tachycardia syndrome. *UpToDate.* 09/2014 2014.
4. Gluckman S. Clinical features and diagnosis of chronic fatigue syndrome. *UpToDate.* 09/2014 2014.



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## TILT TABLE TESTING FOR THE EVALUATION OF SYNCOPE (cont.)

### Resources: (cont.)

5. Jeon EJ, Park YS, Park SN, et al. Clinical significance of orthostatic dizziness in the diagnosis of benign paroxysmal positional vertigo and orthostatic intolerance. *Am J Otolaryngol*. September - October 2013;34(5):471-476.
6. UpToDate. Treatment of systemic exertion intolerance disease (chronic fatigue syndrome). 08/21/17, 10/11/2016.
7. UpToDate. Upright Tilt Table Testing in the Evaluation of Syncope. 08/10/17.



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## TILT TABLE TESTING FOR THE EVALUATION OF SYNCOPE (cont.)

### Non-Discrimination Statement:

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona (BCBSAZ) complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. BCBSAZ provides appropriate free aids and services, such as qualified interpreters and written information in other formats, to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us. BCBSAZ also provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as qualified interpreters and information written in other languages. If you need these services, call (602) 864-4884 for Spanish and (877) 475-4799 for all other languages and other aids and services.

If you believe that BCBSAZ has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance with: BCBSAZ's Civil Rights Coordinator, Attn: Civil Rights Coordinator, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, P.O. Box 13466, Phoenix, AZ 85002-3466, (602) 864-2288, TTY/TDD (602) 864-4823, [crc@azblue.com](mailto:crc@azblue.com). You can file a grievance in person or by mail or email. If you need help filing a grievance BCBSAZ's Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you. You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD). Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>

### Multi-Language Interpreter Services:

Spanish: Si usted, o alguien a quien usted está ayudando, tiene preguntas acerca de Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, tiene derecho a obtener ayuda e información en su idioma sin costo alguno. Para hablar con un intérprete, llame al 602-864-4884.

Navajo: Díí kwe'é atah nilinígíí Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona haada yit'éego bina'idílkidgo éí doodago Háida bíjá anilyeedígíí t'áadoo le'é yina'idílkidgo beehaz'áanii hólo díí t'áa hazaadk'ehjí háká a'doowolgo bee haz'ą doo baqah ilínígóó. Ata' halne'ígíí kojí' bich'í' hodílnih 877-475-4799.

Chinese: 如果您，或是您正在協助的對象，有關於插入項目的名稱 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona 方面的問題，您有權利免費以您的母語得到幫助和訊息。洽詢一位翻譯員，請撥電話 在此插入數字 877-475-4799。

Vietnamese: Nếu quý vị, hay người mà quý vị đang giúp đỡ, có câu hỏi về Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona quý vị sẽ có quyền được giúp và có thêm thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ của mình miễn phí. Để nói chuyện với một thông dịch viên, xin gọi 877-475-4799.

Arabic:

إن كان لديك أو لدى شخص تساعد أسئلة بخصوص Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona، فلديك الحق في الحصول على المساعدة والمعلومات الضرورية بلغتك من دون أية تكلفة. للتحدث مع مترجم اتصل بـ 877-475-4799.



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### Multi-Language Interpreter Services: (cont.)

**Tagalog:** Kung ikaw, o ang iyong tinutulangan, ay may mga katanungan tungkol sa Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, may karapatan ka na makakuha ng tulong at impormasyon sa iyong wika ng walang gastos. Upang makausap ang isang tagasalin, tumawag sa 877-475-4799.

**Korean:** 만약 귀하 또는 귀하가 돕고 있는 어떤 사람이 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona 에 관해서 질문이 있다면 귀하는 그러한 도움과 정보를 귀하의 언어로 비용 부담없이 얻을 수 있는 권리가 있습니다. 그렇게 통역사와 얘기하기 위해서는 877-475-4799 로 전화하십시오.

**French:** Si vous, ou quelqu'un que vous êtes en train d'aider, a des questions à propos de Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, vous avez le droit d'obtenir de l'aide et l'information dans votre langue à aucun coût. Pour parler à un interprète, appelez 877-475-4799.

**German:** Falls Sie oder jemand, dem Sie helfen, Fragen zum Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona haben, haben Sie das Recht, kostenlose Hilfe und Informationen in Ihrer Sprache zu erhalten. Um mit einem Dolmetscher zu sprechen, rufen Sie bitte die Nummer 877-475-4799 an.

**Russian:** Если у вас или лица, которому вы помогаете, имеются вопросы по поводу Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, то вы имеете право на бесплатное получение помощи и информации на вашем языке. Для разговора с переводчиком позвоните по телефону 877-475-4799.

**Japanese:** ご本人様、またはお客様の身の回りの方でも、Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona についてご質問がございましたら、ご希望の言語でサポートを受けたり、情報を入手したりすることができます。料金はありません。通訳とお話される場合、877-475-4799 までお電話ください。

**Farsi:** اگر شما، یا کسی که شما به او کمک میکنید، سوال در مورد Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona، داشته باشید حق این را دارید که کمک و اطلاعات به زبان خود را به طور رایگان دریافت نمایید 877-475-4799 [تماس حاصل نمائید].

**Assyrian:** .877-475-4799

**Serbo-Croatian:** Ukoliko Vi ili neko kome Vi pomažete ima pitanje o Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, imate pravo da besplatno dobijete pomoć i informacije na Vašem jeziku. Da biste razgovarali sa prevodiocem, nazovite 877-475-4799.

**Thai:** หากคุณ หรือคนทศณกลางช่วยเหลอมคตถนภคณ Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona คณมสทศทจะคดรบคความช่วยเหลือและขอมลในภคชช ของคณคดโดยไมมคคชชจจ พดคยคณลลลล โทร 877-475-4799