



MEDICAL COVERAGE GUIDELINES  
SECTION: MEDICINE

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/07/17  
LAST REVIEW DATE: 06/19/18  
LAST CRITERIA REVISION DATE:  
ARCHIVE DATE:

---

## SPHENOPALATINE GANGLION BLOCKS

---

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.

BLUE CROSS®, BLUE SHIELD® and the Cross and Shield Symbols are registered service marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans. All other trademarks and service marks contained in this guideline are the property of their respective owners, which are not affiliated with BCBSAZ.



MEDICAL COVERAGE GUIDELINES  
SECTION: MEDICINE

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/07/17  
LAST REVIEW DATE: 06/19/18  
LAST CRITERIA REVISION DATE:  
ARCHIVE DATE:

---

## SPHENOPALATINE GANGLION BLOCKS (cont.)

### Description:

The Sphenopalatine Ganglion (SPG) is a group of nerve cells located behind the bony structures of the nose. The nerve bundle is linked to the trigeminal nerve, the primary nerve involved in head and facial pain. SPG nerve blocks involve topical application of a local anesthetic intranasally to mucosa overlying the SPG.

Commercially available catheter devices include, *but are not limited to*:

- Allevio™
- SpenoCath®
- Tx360®

---

### Criteria:

- Sphenopalatine ganglion blocks for all indications 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, and
  3. Insufficient evidence to support improvement of the net health outcome as much as, or more than, established alternatives.
  4. Insufficient evidence to support improvement outside the investigational setting.

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

- Treatment of migraine headaches
- Treatment of non-migraine headaches



MEDICAL COVERAGE GUIDELINES  
SECTION: MEDICINE

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/07/17  
LAST REVIEW DATE: 06/19/18  
LAST CRITERIA REVISION DATE:  
ARCHIVE DATE:

---

## SPHENOPALATINE GANGLION BLOCKS (cont.)

### Resources:

Literature reviewed 06/07/17. We do not include marketing materials, poster boards and non-published literature in our review.

1. 7.01.159 BCBS Association Medical Policy Reference Manual. Sphenopalatine Ganglion Block for Headache. Issue date 05/08/2017.
2. Cady R, Saper J, Dexter K, Manley HR. A double-blind, placebo-controlled study of repetitive transnasal sphenopalatine ganglion blockade with tx360((R)) as acute treatment for chronic migraine. *Headache*. Jan 2015;55(1):101-116.
3. Cady RK, Saper J, Dexter K, Cady RJ, Manley HR. Long-term efficacy of a double-blind, placebo-controlled, randomized study for repetitive sphenopalatine blockade with bupivacaine vs. saline with the Tx360 device for treatment of chronic migraine. *Headache*. Apr 2015;55(4):529-542.
4. Candido KD, Massey ST, Sauer R, Darabad RR, Knezevic NN. A novel revision to the classical transnasal topical sphenopalatine ganglion block for the treatment of headache and facial pain. *Pain physician*. Nov-Dec 2013;16(6):E769-778.
5. Schaffer JT, Hunter BR, Ball KM, Weaver CS. Noninvasive sphenopalatine ganglion block for acute headache in the emergency department: a randomized placebo-controlled trial. *Annals of emergency medicine*. May 2015;65(5):503-510.



MEDICAL COVERAGE GUIDELINES  
SECTION: MEDICINE

ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: 06/07/17  
LAST REVIEW DATE: 06/19/18  
LAST CRITERIA REVISION DATE:  
ARCHIVE DATE:

---

## SPHENOPALATINE GANGLION BLOCKS (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'idííkidgo éí doodago Háida bíjá anilyeedígíí t'áadoo le'é yina'idííkidgo beehaz'áanii hólg díí t'áa hazaadk'ehjí háká a'doowołgo bee haz'ą doo baqah ílinígóó. Ata' halne'ígíí kojí' bich'í' hodíilnih 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.

