

# MEDICAL POLICY



<b>SUBJECT: MICROVASCULAR DECOMPRESSION FOR HEMIFACIAL SPASMS AND TRIGEMINAL NEURALGIA</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE: 09/16/99</b> <b>REVISED DATE: 04/19/01, 4/17/02</b> <b>ARCHIVED DATE: 02/20/03</b> <b>EDITED DATE: 11/10/05, 11/16/06, 11/15/07, 11/20/08, 10/29/09, 10/28/10, 09/15/11, 9/20/12, 09/19/13, 09/18/14</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER: 7.01.37</b> <b>CATEGORY: Technology Assessment</b>	<b>PAGE: 1 OF: 2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>If the member's subscriber contract excludes coverage for a specific service it is not covered under that contract. In such cases, medical policy criteria are not applied.</i></li><li><i>Medical policies apply to commercial and Medicaid products only when a contract benefit for the specific service exists.</i></li><li><i>Medical policies only apply to Medicare products when a contract benefit exists and where there are no National or Local Medicare coverage decisions for the specific service.</i></li></ul>	

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Based upon our criteria and assessment of peer-reviewed literature, microvascular decompression has been medically proven to be effective, and therefore, is **medically appropriate** as an alternative method of treatment for trigeminal neuralgia and hemifacial spasms under the following conditions:

- I. Symptoms associated with trigeminal neuralgia and hemifacial spasms must have persisted for at least six months despite conservative treatment with pharmacotherapies; or
- II. The patient is not able to tolerate the side effects of the medications usually prescribed in the treatment of these two disorders.

## **DESCRIPTION:**

Trigeminal neuralgia (tic douloureux) is characterized by brief episodes of extremely intense facial pain often radiating down the jaw. Pain can be triggered by laughing, chewing, teeth brushing, talking, or even just touching the face. Trigeminal neuralgia is caused by irritation of the fifth cranial nerve (trigeminal nerve).

Hemifacial spasms (tic convulsif) are characterized by disabling facial spasms or tics. These tics are usually not painful and initially effect only one side of the face. Hemifacial spasm is thought to be caused by irritation of the seventh cranial nerve (facial nerve).

Hyperactive dysfunctional cranial nerve syndromes, which include trigeminal neuralgia and hemifacial spasms, have been associated with vascular compression. Decompressing the involved nerve from compressing vessels results in long-term relief from the symptoms of these disorders.

Microvascular decompression has become an accepted surgical technique as an alternative to medical management in the treatment of trigeminal neuralgia and hemifacial spasms. Intraoperative neurophysiological monitoring (e.g., brainstem-evoked response) should be performed to prevent postoperative auditory complications.

## **RATIONALE:**

Published studies have demonstrated the long-term efficacy and safety of microvascular decompression as a treatment method for vascular compression associated with cranial nerve disorders. Micro-vascular decompression represents one of the most widely used surgical options for patients experiencing microvascular compression syndromes.

## **CODES:**      Number      Description

*Eligibility for reimbursement is based upon the benefits set forth in the member's subscriber contract.*

**CODES MAY NOT BE COVERED UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. PLEASE READ THE POLICY AND GUIDELINES STATEMENTS CAREFULLY.**

Codes may not be all inclusive as the AMA and CMS code updates may occur more frequently than policy updates.

<b><u>CPT:</u></b>	61450	Craniectomy; subtemporal for section, compression, or decompression of sensory root of gasserian ganglion
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- 61458 Craniectomy; suboccipital; for exploration or decompression of cranial nerves
- 61460 for section of one or more cranial nerves
- 64716 Neuroplasty and/or transposition; cranial nerve (specify)
- 64722 Decompression; unspecified nerve(s) (specify)

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**HCPCS:** No specific code

**ICD9:** 351.0-351.9 Facial nerve disorders (code range)

350.1 Trigeminal neuralgia

**ICD10:** G50.0 Trigeminal neuralgia

G51.0- G51.9 Facial nerve disorders (code range)

### **REFERENCES:**

Broggi G, et al. Microvascular decompression for trigeminal neuralgia: comments on a series of 250 cases, including 10 patients with multiple sclerosis. J Neurol Neurosurg Psych 2000 Jan;68(1):59-64.

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McLaughlin MR, et al. Microvascular decompression of cranial nerves: lessons learned after 4400 operations. J Neurosurg 1999 Jan;90(1):1-8.

Patel A, et al. Microvascular decompression in the management of glossopharyngeal neuralgia: analysis of 217 cases. Neurosurg 2002 Apr;50(4):705-10.

Samii M, et al. Microvascular decompression to treat hemifacial spasm: long-term results for a consecutive series of 143 patients. Neurosurg 2002 Apr;50(4):712-8.

Tronnier VM, et al. Treatment of idiopathic trigeminal neuralgia; comparison of long-term outcome after radiofrequency rhizotomy and microvascular decompression. Neurosurg 2001 Jun;48(6):1261-7.

### **KEY WORDS:**

Cranial nerve compression, Hemifacial spasms, Microvascular decompression, Trigeminal neuralgia.

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## **CMS COVERAGE FOR MEDICARE PRODUCT MEMBERS**

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Based on our review, there is no specific regional or national coverage determination addressing microvascular decompression for hemifacial spasms and trigeminal neuralgia.