

# MEDICAL POLICY

MEDICAL POLICY DETAILS	
Medical Policy Title	Spinal Manipulation Under Anesthesia
Policy Number	7.01.76
Category	Contract Clarification
Original Effective Date	04/19/07
Committee Approval Date	04/17/08, 05/28/09, 05/27/10, 08/18/11, 07/19/12, 05/23/13
Current Effective Date	12/21/23
Archived Date	05/22/14
Archive Review Date	05/28/15, 05/25/16, 05/18/17, 06/21/18, 12/20/18, 12/19/19, 12/17/20, 12/16/21, 12/22/22, 12/21/23
Product Disclaimer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a product excludes coverage for a service, it is not covered, and medical policy criteria do not apply.</li> <li>If a commercial product (including an Essential Plan or Child Health Plus product), medical policy criteria apply to the benefit.</li> <li>If a Medicaid product covers a specific service, and there are no New York State Medicaid guidelines (eMedNY) criteria, medical policy criteria apply to the benefit.</li> <li>If a Medicare product (including Medicare HMO-Dual Special Needs Program (DSNP) product) covers a specific service, and there is no national or local Medicare coverage decision for the service, medical policy criteria apply to the benefit.</li> <li>If a Medicare HMO-Dual Special Needs Program (DSNP) product DOES NOT cover a specific service, please refer to the Medicaid Product coverage line.</li> </ul>

## POLICY STATEMENT

- I. Based upon our criteria and assessment of the peer-reviewed literature, spinal manipulation under anesthesia (MUA) has been medically proven to be effective and, therefore, is considered **medically appropriate** in an emergent situation, as a closed treatment of traumatically induced vertebral fracture or dislocation, to mitigate the potential for neurological compromise when the patient is either sedated or under general anesthesia, and the decision for an open reduction has been considered by a qualified physician.
- II. Based upon our criteria and the lack of peer-reviewed literature, spinal MUA, in the absence of traumatically induced vertebral fracture or dislocation, is considered **not medically necessary**.
- III. Based upon our criteria and assessment of the peer-reviewed literature, spinal MUA performed in isolation, without the patient participating in an active rehabilitation program in conjunction with a home exercise program, is considered **not medically necessary**.

*Refer to Corporate Medical Policy #10.01.02 Chiropractic Care*

*Refer to Corporate Medical Policy #11.01.15 Medically Necessary Services*

*This policy does not address manipulation under anesthesia for adhesive capsulitis/frozen shoulder or arthrofibrosis of the knee.*

## POLICY GUIDELINE

Manipulation under anesthesia should be performed in conjunction with an active rehabilitation/therapeutic exercise program.

**Medical Policy: SPINAL MANIPULATION UNDER ANESTHESIA**

**Policy Number: 7.01.76**

**Page: 2 of 3**

**DESCRIPTION**

MUA consists of a series of mobilization, stretching, and traction procedures performed while the patient receives anesthesia (usually general anesthesia or moderate sedation) and is intended to break up fibrous and scar tissue to relieve pain and improve range of motion. Anesthesia or sedation is used to reduce pain, spasm, and reflex muscle-guarding that may interfere with the delivery of therapies and to allow the practitioner to break up joint and soft-tissue adhesions with less force than would be required to overcome patient resistance or apprehension.

MUA has been proposed as a treatment modality for acute and chronic pain conditions, particularly of the spinal region, when standard care, including manipulation, and other conservative measures have been unsuccessful.

In spinal MUA, a low-velocity/high-amplitude technique may be used, in contrast to the high-velocity/low-amplitude technique that is used in the typical spinal adjustment. A single session or multiple sessions of MUA may be followed by a series of outpatient sessions. In some instances, the MUA may be accompanied by corticosteroid injections.

MUA is performed by chiropractors, physical therapists, physicians, or other health care providers who are licensed to perform the services. MUA is generally performed with an anesthesiologist in attendance.

**RATIONALE**

Scientific evidence regarding spinal manipulation under anesthesia, spinal manipulation with joint anesthesia, and spinal manipulation after epidural anesthesia and corticosteroid injection, is limited to observational case series and non-randomized comparative studies. Evidence regarding the efficacy of MUA over several sessions or for multiple joints is also lacking. Evidence is insufficient to determine whether MUA improves health outcomes.

**CODES**

- *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.*
- *Code Key: Experimental/Investigational = (E/I), Not medically necessary/ appropriate = (NMN).*

**CPT Codes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
00640	Anesthesia for manipulation of the spine or for closed procedures on the cervical, thoracic or lumbar spine
22505	Manipulation of spine requiring anesthesia, any region

*Copyright © 2023 American Medical Association, Chicago, IL*

**HCPCS Codes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
No code(s)	

**ICD10 Codes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
Multiple codes	

**REFERENCES**

Digiorgi D. Spinal manipulation under anesthesia: a narrative review of the literature and commentary. Chiropr Man Therap 2013 May 14;21(1):14.

**Medical Policy: SPINAL MANIPULATION UNDER ANESTHESIA**

**Policy Number: 7.01.76**

**Page: 3 of 3**

DiGiorgi D, Cerf J, Bowerman D. Outcomes indicators and a risk classification system for spinal manipulation under anesthesia: a narrative review and proposal. Chiropr Man Therap 2018;26:9-19.

\*Gordon R, et al. Guidelines for the practice and performance of manipulation under anesthesia. Chiro Man Ther 2014;22(1):7 [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3917622/>] accessed 11/08/23.

\*Haldeman S, et al. Guidelines for chiropractic quality assurance and practice parameters: proceedings of the Mercy Center consensus conference, Burlingame, CA, January 25-30, 1992. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers, 1993, reaffirmed 1999.

\*Kohlbeck FJ, et al. Medication-assisted spinal manipulation. Spine J 2002 Jul-Aug;2(4):288-302.

National Academy of Manipulation under Anesthesia Physicians. Manipulation under anesthesia – national guidelines. 2002 [[http://muaonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/National\\_Guidelines\\_NAMUA.pdf](http://muaonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/National_Guidelines_NAMUA.pdf)] accessed 11/08/23.

\*Palmieri NF, et al. Chronic low back pain: A study of the effects of manipulation under anesthesia. J Manipulative Physiol Ther 2002 Oct;25(8):E8-17.

\*Peterson CK, et al. Outcomes for chronic neck and low back pain patients after manipulation under anesthesia: a prospective cohort study. J Manipulative Physiol Ther 2014 Jul-Aug;37(6):377-82.

\*West DT, et al. Effective management of spinal pain in one hundred seventy-seven patients evaluated for manipulation under anesthesia. J Manipulative Physiol Ther 1999 Jun;22(5):299-308.

\*Key Article

**CMS COVERAGE FOR MEDICARE PRODUCT MEMBERS**

Based on our review, manipulation under anesthesia is not addressed in National or Regional Medicare coverage determinations or policies.