

# Acupuncture

## What does my health insurance cover?



### Find out when and how acupuncture is covered by your health plan

#### What is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is a health practice that involves using needles placed under the skin to stimulate points in the body and ease symptoms. Studies suggest that acupuncture may help ease chronic pain and certain other conditions and is a reasonable option for people with chronic pain to consider.<sup>1</sup>

#### How does Independence cover acupuncture?

Subject to your benefits, Independence Blue Cross (Independence) members are covered for 18 acupuncture visits for pain management and certain other conditions:<sup>2</sup>

- Headache (migraine, tension)
- Post-operative and chemotherapy-induced nausea, vomiting
- Nausea from pregnancy
- Low back pain
- Pain from osteoarthritis of knee/hip
- Chronic neck pain

Acupuncture for these conditions is available without precertification, and coverage is based on plan type:

- PPO members will pay specialist cost-sharing.
- HMO, POS, and DPOS members will need a referral from their PCP and will pay their specialist cost-sharing.



Learn more about your acupuncture benefits

**Call Customer Service at the number on the back of your member ID card.**

#### Is acupuncture right for me?

To determine whether you could benefit from acupuncture:

- **Talk with your doctor.** Acupuncture should only be used to complement your doctor's care, not replace it. Your doctor can help you decide if acupuncture is right for your symptoms.
- **Check covered conditions.** Review Medical Policy #12.00.01 at [ibx.com/medpolicy](http://ibx.com/medpolicy) to determine the conditions for which acupuncture is considered medically necessary.
- **Find the right practitioner.** Ask your doctor for a recommendation, or visit [ibx.com/findadoctor](http://ibx.com/findadoctor). Use as much care as you would in choosing a traditional health care professional.

<sup>1</sup> National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health. Acupuncture: In Depth, nccih.nih.gov. Accessed on October 15, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> For PPO members, the 18 acupuncture visits are combined in- and out-of-network.

Acupuncture is covered for limited conditions. For details on covered conditions, please reference medical policy #12.00.01, which you can find at [ibx.com/medpolicy](http://ibx.com/medpolicy).

Independence Blue Cross offers products through its subsidiaries Independence Hospital Indemnity Plan, Keystone Health Plan East and QCC Insurance Company, and with Highmark Blue Shield — independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.