

Molina Clinical Policy

Implantable Intrathecal Pain Pump: Policy No. 160

Last Approval: 08/14/2024

Next Review Due By: August 2025



DISCLAIMER

This Molina Clinical Policy (MCP) is intended to facilitate the Utilization Management process. Policies are not a supplementation or recommendation for treatment; Providers are solely responsible for the diagnosis, treatment, and clinical recommendations for the Member. It expresses Molina's determination as to whether certain services or supplies are medically necessary, experimental, investigational, or cosmetic for purposes of determining appropriateness of payment. The conclusion that a particular service or supply is medically necessary does not constitute a representation or warranty that this service or supply is covered (e.g., will be paid for by Molina) for a particular Member. The Member's benefit plan determines coverage – each benefit plan defines which services are covered, which are excluded, and which are subject to dollar caps or other limits. Members and their Providers will need to consult the Member's benefit plan to determine if there are any exclusion(s) or other benefit limitations applicable to this service or supply. If there is a discrepancy between this policy and a Member's plan of benefits, the benefits plan will govern. In addition, coverage may be mandated by applicable legal requirements of a State, the Federal government or CMS for Medicare and Medicaid Members. CMS's Coverage Database can be found on the CMS website. The coverage directive(s) and criteria from an existing National Coverage Determination (NCD) or Local Coverage Determination (LCD) will supersede the contents of this MCP and provide the directive for all Medicare members. References included were accurate at the time of policy approval and publication.

OVERVIEW

Chronic pain is defined by three general parameters: persistence beyond an expected time frame for healing or recovery, non-responsiveness to routine pain control methods or to appropriate surgical interventions, and adversely affecting functional ability or wellbeing. Treatment strategies for chronic pain begin with the least invasive such as exercise programs, meditation, relaxation, and nonprescription analgesics or anti-inflammatory drugs. If these treatments are ineffective additional pharmacotherapy may be used alone or with adjunctive medications. Local or regional nerve blocks, transcutaneous electrical stimulation, or electrical stimulation of the spinal cord may also be used to provide pain relief. If adequate pain relief is not achieved or intolerable side effects manifest with the previously mentioned strategies, intrathecal infusion of opioids may provide effective pain relief.

Implantable infusion pump (IIP), sometimes referred to as intrathecal drug delivery systems (IDDS), is a drug delivery system that provides continuous infusion of an agent at a constant and precise rate over a prolonged period directly into the cerebrospinal fluid via a catheter placed in the intrathecal space. The infusion pump may be either nonprogrammable at a fixed-rate (e.g., deliver a predetermined steady rate of infusion) or programmable (e.g., variable delivery rates) and is refillable via an external needle injection port in the pump. IIP for administration of intraspinal (neuraxial) non opioid and opioid therapy may be appropriate for patients who continue to suffer from severe pain despite aggressive attempts at management. This route of administration, as compared with other routes, provides increased analgesia at a lower dose of drug which causes fewer systemic side effects. Long-term complications following spinal catheter implantation include infection, epidural abscess, and catheter dislodgement or occlusion.

Regulatory Status

The FDA has approved several implantable miniature pumps that are suitable for continuous intrathecal administration of opioid drug therapy. Programmable, implantable infusion pumps are regulated by the FDA as Class III devices in the Premarket Approval (PMA) Database under the product code LKK (implanted programmable infusion pump).

COVERAGE POLICY

For coverage regarding implanted intrathecal infusion pump therapy for administration of intraspinal antispasmodic therapy for spasticity or dystonia refer to MCG policy A-0420.

Implanted intrathecal infusion pump therapy for administration of intraspinal opioid or non-opioid analgesic therapy is **considered medically necessary** in adults with severe, chronic, intractable pain for the following indications:

1. For treatment of **malignant pain** when **ALL** the following criteria are met:
 - a. Diagnosis of severe, intractable pain of *cancer* origin affecting activity of daily living functional ability (>6 on the NRS Pain Rating Scale*)
 - b. Life expectancy of at least 3 months
 - c. Documented failure of, or presence of unacceptable side effects from, systemic opioid or other analgesic therapy to provide adequate pain relief.
 - d. Body size adequate to support pump device.

Molina Clinical Policy

Implantable Intrathecal Pain Pump: Policy No. 160

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Next Review Due By: August 2025



- e. No active infection
 - f. No tumor encroachment of the thecal sac or epidural metastases confirmed via appropriate testing.
 - g. Documented absence of contraindications to implantation (such as coagulopathy, profound leukopenia, or pancytopenia, increased intracranial pressure)
 - h. Prior to permanent implantation, a temporary trial of intrathecal opiates or non-opiate analgesics has been successful, as defined by a 50% reduction in pain and a self-reported improvement in daily functional ability
 - i. Note: A temporary trial is only considered medically necessary when ALL criteria a–g is met
2. For treatment of **non-malignant pain** when **ALL** the following criteria are met:
- a. Diagnosis of severe, intractable pain of *non-cancer* origin affecting activity of daily living functional ability (>6 on the NRS Pain Rating Scale*)
 - b. Failure of interventions to treat underlying cause of pain.
 - c. Documented failure of, or presence of unacceptable side effects from, systemic opioid or other analgesic therapy to provide adequate pain relief administered on a fixed prescribed schedule, NOT on an as needed basis with accompanying documentation of member compliance with attempted pharmacological management.
 - d. Documented failure of conservative treatment (such as pharmacologic, surgical, psychological, and/or physical therapy) for a minimum of six (6) months, if appropriate and not contraindicated.
 - e. Documented psychological evaluation and confirmed absence of acute psychiatric instability and/or suicide risk with accompanying documentation of member as a favorable candidate for permanent intrathecal pump by a license mental health professional.
 - f. Body size adequate to support pump device.
 - g. No active infection.
 - h. Documented absence of contraindications to implantation (such as coagulopathy, profound leukopenia, or pancytopenia, increased intracranial pressure)
 - i. Prior to permanent implantation, a temporary trial of intrathecal opiates or non-opiate analgesics has been successful, as defined by a 50% reduction in pain and a self-reported improvement in daily functional ability
 - i. Note: A temporary trial is only medically necessary when ALL criteria a–h is met

Implanted intrathecal infusion pump therapy for any indication other than those listed above are considered **experimental, investigational, or unproven** based on insufficient evidence.

Refer to supplemental information section for details on NRS Pain Rating Scale

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS. Molina Healthcare reserves the right to require that additional documentation be made available as part of its coverage determination; quality improvement; and fraud; waste and abuse prevention processes. Documentation required may include, but is not limited to, patient records, test results and credentials of the provider ordering or performing a drug or service. Molina Healthcare may deny reimbursement or take additional appropriate action if the documentation provided does not support the initial determination that the drugs or services were medically necessary, not investigational, or experimental, and otherwise within the scope of benefits afforded to the member, and/or the documentation demonstrates a pattern of billing or other practice that is inappropriate or excessive.

SUMMARY OF MEDICAL EVIDENCE

Intrathecal implantable infusion pumps, sometimes called intrathecal drug delivery systems (IDDS), are well-studied with much evidence supporting its indications, safety, and efficacy. Below are a few of the most recent and relevant studies used to support this policy.

Malignant (Cancer) Pain

Perruchoud et al. (2023) conducted a clinical study systematic review and meta-analysis analyzing the management of cancer related pain with intrathecal drug delivery systems. Studies that evaluated the safety and efficacy of IDDS in patients with cancer related pain between 1990 – 2019 were included and their data extracted to determine mean changes in pain levels from baseline, changes in opioid daily dose from baseline, and infection rates. On a 0 to 10 scale, mean differences were -4.34 (95% CI [-4.93 to -3.75], $p < 0.001$) at 4 to 5 weeks; -4.34 (95% CI [-5.07 to -3.62], $p < 0.001$) at 6 to 12 weeks; and -3.32 (95% CI [-4.60 to -2.04], $p < 0.001$) at >6 months. Weighted mean oral morphine equivalent consumption was reduced by 308.24 (SE = 22.72) mg/d, and weighted mean infection rates were

Molina Clinical Policy

Implantable Intrathecal Pain Pump: Policy No. 160

Last Approval: 08/14/2024

Next Review Due By: August 2025



approximately 3% for external and implanted pumps, which is comparable to other IDDS indication uses. The authors concluded that the results supported IDDS being a safe and effective means of a sustainable reduction in cancer associated chronic pain.

Stearns LM et al. (2020) conducted a long term multicenter prospective analysis of a product surveillance registry to augment the existing safety and efficacy data surrounding intrathecal opioid therapy in cancer patients. The registry began in 2003 to monitor the performance of SynchroMed Infusion Systems, with patient reported outcomes added beginning in 2013. The data collected from 1403 cancer patients implanted with an intrathecal IIP was analyzed to reveal a significant improvement in quality of life and pain reduction from baseline to 6 months. Adverse events, such as infection, replacement, and/or pocket revision, were reported in 3.2% of patients.

Brogan et al. (2020) conducted a prospective observational study to assess serum opioid levels, pain control, reduced systemic side effects, and improved survival rates in cancer patients implanted with an intrathecal IIP. Opioids are a staple of cancer pain management but often result in harsh side effects and systemic toxicity, the goal of this study was to collect data validating that intrathecal opioid use decrease systemic opioid levels and their associate toxicity system side effects. Daily oral morphine equivalency dose, serum opioid levels, pain and symptom inventory, and a constipation questionnaire were obtained at time of implantation, 4 weeks, and 8 weeks post implantation. Average baseline daily oral morphine equivalency was 375 mg (median, 240; interquartile range, 150-405; range, 0-3160), mean serum morphine concentration was 53.7 ng/mL (n = 17), and mean oxycodone concentration was 73.7 ng/mL (n = 20). At 4 weeks, 87.5% of patients had discontinued non-intrathecal opioids, and 53% had undetectable (<2 ng/mL) serum opioid concentrations. At 8 weeks, 92% remained off all non-intrathecal opioids and 59% had undetectable serum opioid levels. Statistically significant decreases in the mean "worst pain," "average pain," and symptom severity were reported at 4 and 8 weeks. The pain and symptom decrease reported were independent of serum opioid levels; when analyzed separately, there was no difference in the pain scores of subjects with detectable serum opioid levels compared to those with undetectable levels at 4 and 8 weeks. Constipation ranked as "quite a bit" or "very much" decreased from 58.7% to 19.2% of subjects at week 4 (P < .001) and to 37.5% at 8 weeks (P = .23). A low complication rate was observed.

Stearns LJ et al. (2019) conducted an economic evaluation of claims data on 536 patients from a large US payer database. The analysis revealed a cost savings of over \$63k USD per patient when implantable targeted drug delivery therapy was utilized in conjunction with conventional medical management versus conventional medication management alone. Patients with an IIP also saw a reduction in fewer inpatient visits, shorter inpatient length of stay, and fewer emergency department visits.

Non-Malignant Pain

Pope et al. (2022) conducted an RCT evaluating intrathecal pain medication versus conventional medical management in the non-cancer, refractory, chronic pain population. Patients were randomized 1:1 and placed into IDDS group or conventional medical management (CMM) group and followed for 3, 6, 9, and 12 months. The study included 54 patients total with 26 in IDDS group and 28 in the CMM group. At 3 months, there was no measurable difference in pain improvement within the CMM group vs IDDS where early and maintained benefit from the baseline was statistically achieved. The investigators reported no adverse events related to compounded intrathecal medications. The authors concluded that IDDS is safe and effective in treating non-malignant pain.

Wilkes et al. (2018) conducted a retrospective medical record review of 60 noncancer chronic pain patients who received an intrathecal infusion pump and completed a morphine microdose monotherapy regimen. Fifty eight percent of patients' pain was successfully managed with intrathecal microdose morphine alone without additional oral therapy. Overall pain reduction occurred in all patients with mean pain scores from 7.4 ± 0.32 before microdose therapy to 4.8 ± 0.3 after microdose therapy. Microdosing morphine showed promise in achieving effective analgesia, reducing side effects, and being cost effectively managed in the outpatient setting.

Kleinmann and Wolter (2017) conducted a chart review on patients treated with an intrathecal infusion pump for non-malignant pain at a single institution between 1990-2014. Thirty-six patients were included in the review with a mean duration of intrathecal opioid therapy of 11.8 years. Pain levels prior to pump implantation were 7.98 utilizing the Numeric Pain Rating Scale. Pain levels directly after pump implantation were 4.87 and at time of follow-up 4.44 reported. Adverse events recorded were typically unwanted clinical side effects such as fatigue, obstipation, urinary retention, and sexual dysfunction; however, there was no life-threatening complication or permanent neurological deficits reported.

Molina Clinical Policy Implantable Intrathecal Pain Pump: Policy No. 160

Last Approval: 08/14/2024

Next Review Due By: August 2025



Hamza et al. (2012) performed a small prospective, cohort long-term outcome study with the use of low-dose opioids in intrathecal drug delivery system for the treatment of intractable, severe chronic nonmalignant pain. A total of 61 patients with a mean duration of symptoms prior to implant of 6.2 years were included in the study. After adequate patient evaluation, each underwent a trial with intrathecal opioids. Three patients failed the trial, and 58 patients were implanted. Follow-up was 36 months, with intervals at 6, 12, 18, 24, and 36 months. The Brief Pain Inventory was used at baseline prior to implantation and at follow up for the duration of the study. Outcome measures included self-reported pain scores (worst and average), functional improvement, intrathecal dose, and oral opioid consumption. A statistically significant reduction in both worst and average pain from baseline throughout the duration of the study was observed, as well as a statistically significant improvement in physical and behavioral function. All subjects showed a significant reduction in oral opioid consumption. The dose of IT opioids remained low and unchanged for 36 months of follow-up: 1.4 morphine equivalent/day at 6 months and 1.48 at 36 months. Oral opioid averaged 128.9mg of morphine equivalent/patient/day at baseline to 3.8 at 3 month and remained at the same level throughout the study. The authors concluded that low-dose IT opioid can provide sustained significant improvement in pain and function for long-term follow-up in chronic non-cancer pain.

National and Specialty Guidelines

The American Society of Pain and Neuroscience (ASPN) issued two best practices and guidelines for the use of intrathecal drug delivery.

- *Evidence-Based Clinical Guideline of Interventional Treatments for Low Back Pain* (Sayed et al. 2022) addressed intrathecal drug delivery in the management of chronic lower back pain. The guideline recommends IDDS in patients that have chronic intractable lower back pain after a complete workup for pain origin, treatment of psychologic factors that may influence pain outcomes, and multiple evidence based appropriately used biomedical therapies have failed to adequately treat the chronic pain. The guideline highlights that appropriate patient selection is crucial for the safety and success of IDDS therapy.
- *Best Practices and Guidelines for the Interventional Management of Cancer-Associated Pain* (Aman et al. 2021) addressed intrathecal drug delivery in the management of chronic pain due to malignancy. The guideline states that intrathecal analgesia is indicated in cancer patients with severe pain where conventional medication regimens have failed. The therapy has been proven to be effective in pain reduction with accompanying side effect reduction, as well as cost effective for the US payer.

The American Society of Anesthesiologists and The American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine (ASA-ASRA) issued *Practice Guidelines for Chronic Pain Management: An Updated Report by the American Society of Anesthesiologists Task Force on Chronic Pain Management and the American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine* (2010). According to these guidelines, observational studies show that intrathecal opioid injections can provide effective pain relief for 1 to 12 months in patients with neuropathic pain. A discussion of potential complications should be included in shared decision making regarding this procedure. Furthermore, a neuraxial opioid trial should be performed prior to the permanent installation of IT drug delivery systems.

The Polyanalgesic Consensus Conference (PACC) developed a drug selection algorithm for intrathecal therapy based on evidence and expert opinion. Failure of conservative therapies, psychological evaluation, medical history evaluation, and an intrathecal IIP screening trial are all part of the behavioral algorithm for considering patients for intrathecal IIP pain therapy. The algorithm also stipulates which drugs are best as first line agents for different types of chronic pain (Deer et al. 2017).

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The Numeric Rating Scale (NRS-11) Rating Pain Level

0: No Pain

1 – 3: Mild Pain (nagging, annoying, interfering little with ADLs)

4 – 6: Moderate Pain (interferes significantly with ADLs)

7 – 10: Severe Pain (disabling; unable to perform ADLs)

Molina Clinical Policy
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CODING & BILLING INFORMATION

CPT (Current Procedural Terminology) Codes

Code	Description
62350	Implantation, revision or repositioning of tunneled intrathecal or epidural catheter, for long-term medication administration via an external pump or implantable reservoir/infusion pump; without laminectomy
62351	Implantation, revision or repositioning of tunneled intrathecal or epidural catheter, for long-term medication administration via an external pump or implantable reservoir/infusion pump; with laminectomy
62355	Removal of previously implanted intrathecal or epidural catheter
62360	Implantation or replacement of device for intrathecal or epidural drug infusion; subcutaneous reservoir
62361	Implantation or replacement of device for intrathecal or epidural drug infusion; non-programmable pump
62362	Implantation or replacement of device for intrathecal or epidural drug infusion; programmable pump, including preparation of pump, with or without programming
62365	Removal of subcutaneous reservoir or pump, previously implanted for intrathecal or epidural infusion
62367	Electronic analysis of programmable, implanted pump for intrathecal or epidural drug infusion (includes evaluation of reservoir status, alarm status, drug prescription status); without reprogramming or refill
62368	Electronic analysis of programmable, implanted pump for intrathecal or epidural drug infusion (includes evaluation of reservoir status, alarm status, drug prescription status); with reprogramming
62369	Electronic analysis of programmable, implanted pump for intrathecal or epidural drug infusion (includes evaluation of reservoir status, alarm status, drug prescription status); with reprogramming and refill
62370	Electronic analysis of programmable, implanted pump for intrathecal or epidural drug infusion (includes evaluation of reservoir status, alarm status, drug prescription status); with reprogramming and refill (requiring skill of a physician or other qualified health care professional)
95990	Refilling and maintenance of implantable pump or reservoir for drug delivery, spinal (intrathecal, epidural) or brain (intraventricular), includes electronic analysis of pump, when performed;
95991	Refilling and maintenance of implantable pump or reservoir for drug delivery, spinal (intrathecal, epidural) or brain (intraventricular), includes electronic analysis of pump, when performed, requiring skill of a physician or other qualified health care professional

HCPCS (Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System) Codes

Code	Description
A4300	Implantable access catheter, (e.g., venous, arterial, epidural subarachnoid, or peritoneal, etc.) external access
A4301	Implantable access total catheter, port/reservoir (e.g., venous, arterial, epidural, subarachnoid, peritoneal, etc.)
E0782	Infusion pump, implantable, non-programmable (includes all components, e.g., pump, catheter, connectors, etc.)
E0783	Infusion pump system, implantable, programmable (includes all components, e.g., pump, catheter, connectors, etc.)
E0785	Implantable intraspinal (epidural/intrathecal) catheter used with implantable infusion pump, replacement
E0786	Implantable programmable infusion pump, replacement (excludes implantable intraspinal catheter)
C1772	Infusion pump, programmable (implantable)
C1755	Catheter, intraspinal

CODING DISCLAIMER. Codes listed in this policy are for reference purposes only and may not be all-inclusive. Deleted codes and codes which are not effective at the time the service is rendered may not be eligible for reimbursement. Listing of a service or device code in this policy does not guarantee coverage. Coverage is determined by the benefit document. Molina adheres to Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®), a registered trademark of the American Medical Association (AMA). All CPT codes and descriptions are copyrighted by the AMA; this information is included for informational purposes only. Providers and facilities are expected to utilize industry standard coding practices for all submissions. When improper billing and coding is not followed, Molina has the right to reject/deny the claim and recover claim payment(s). Due to changing industry practices, Molina reserves the right to revise this policy as needed.

APPROVAL HISTORY

08/14/2024 Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.

Molina Clinical Policy

Implantable Intrathecal Pain Pump: Policy No. 160

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08/09/2023	Policy reviewed. Coverage criteria updated to include more details surrounding psychological evaluation for non-malignant pain candidates. IRO reviewed by a practicing physician board certified in Pain Management on July 26, 2023.
08/10/2022	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references. Updated name of policy from 'Implantable Infusion Pump For Pain' to 'Implantable Intrathecal Pain Pump.'
08/11/2021	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
06/17/2020	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
06/19/2019	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
07/10/2018	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
06/14/2017	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
03/06/2017	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
06/15/2016	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
12/16/2015	Policy reviewed. No changes to coverage criteria. Updated references.
04/02/2014	New policy.

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