



Effective 6/1/2026

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## Genicular Nerve Blocks

### PURPOSE

This coverage policy addresses genicular nerve block by neurolytic agents as the procedure has been investigated as a method of treatment for knee pain and disability caused by osteoarthritis of the knee and other conditions.

### DEFINITIONS

Genicular: Relating to the knee.

Genicular nerves provide sensory innervation to the knee and include the following nerve branches;

Superolateral genicular nerve (SLGN): The SLGN courses around the femur shaft to pass between the vastus lateralis and the lateral epicondyle. It accompanies the superior lateral genicular artery.

Superomedial genicular nerve (SMGN): The SMGN courses around the femur shaft, following the superior medial genicular artery, to pass between the adductor magnus tendon and the medial epicondyle below the vastus medialis.

Inferomedial genicular nerve (IMGN): The IMGN courses horizontally below the medial collateral ligament between the tibial medial epicondyle and the insertion of the collateral ligament. It accompanies the inferior medial genicular artery.

Inferolateral genicular nerve (ILGN): The ILGN courses around the tibial lateral epicondyle deep to the

lateral collateral ligament,  
following the inferior lateral genicular artery, superior of the fibula head.

Genicular blocks can be performed for all the nerves except the Inferolateral genicular nerve because it is too close to the Peroneal nerve.

## PROCEDURE

A genicular nerve block is an injection of medication close to certain nerves in the knee to with the goal of providing pain relief. The injections may provide temporary or prolonged pain relief. Imaging guidance, such as ultrasound or fluoroscopy may be used to assist the physician in targeting the location for the injection. The whole procedure usually takes about 10 minutes.

Genicular nerve blocks are considered **investigational and experimental and not medically necessary** as a treatment for knee pain related to, but not limited to:

- Osteoarthritis of the knee
- Degenerative joint disease of the knee
- Postoperative surgery to the knee

**Note:** The Health Plan complies with all Medicare National Coverage Determinations (NCDs), applicable Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs), and WV Bureau for Medical Services guidelines for all therapies, items, services, and/or procedures that are covered benefits under Medicare. If the coverage criteria in this policy conflicts with any NCDs, relevant LCD, or WV BMS guidelines, the relevant document controls the application of services regardless of the version of the NCD, LCD, or WV BMS guidelines listed in the reference section.

## CODING

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 64624 | Destruction by neurolytic agent, genicular nerve branches including imaging guidance, when performed. |
| 64454 | Genicular nerve branches, including imaging guidance.   |

Ultrasound guidance is not separately reportable with 64624 and/or 64454 as it is included in the code description. Document all of the genicular nerve branches that are blocked. Both CPT codes 64624 and 64454 include all of the following branches: superolateral, superomedial, and inferomedial. If all 3 of these genicular nerve branches are not injected, a 52 modifier (reduced services) should be added to the claim. Genicular nerve block should not be billed with/in conjunction with genicular nerve destruction. Both CPT Codes are only reported once per session regardless of the number of branches injected.

## REFERENCES

Article Billing and Coding: Nerve Blockade for Treatment of Chronic Pain and Neuropathy (A56043)  
Palmetto (n.d) <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/view/article.aspx?articleid=56034&ver=40&=> Last accessed 03/05/2026

"List of CPT/HCPCS Codes". CMS.gov Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Page Last modified 04/18/2022. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/regulations-guidance/physician-self-referral/list-cpt-hcpcs-codes>. Accessed 06/21/24.

Deveza LA, Bennell K. Management of moderate to severe knee osteoarthritis. In: Up To Date. Hunter D and Law K,eds. Last updated December 20, 2022. Accessed 06/21/2024.

Hayes, Inc. Health Technology Assessment. Genicular nerve block for treatment of knee osteoarthritis. Executive Summary. Hayes, Inc.; Dec 07, 2023. Accessed 06/21/2024

#### Industry Standard Review

Kashif NM, Camp N, Chan J, et al.. Interventional techniques for the management of knee osteoarthritis: a literature review. Cureus Open Access. Published 10/16/2023. Accessed 06/26/2024.

Kim DH, Choi SS, Yoon SH, et al. Ultrasound- guided genicular nerve block for knee osteoarthritis: a double-blind, randomized controlled trial of local anesthetic alone or in combination with corticosteroid. Pain Physician 2018; 21:41-51. Accessed 06/26/24.

LCD Nerve Blockade for Treatment of Chronic Pain and Neuropathy (L35456) (n.d)  
<https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/view/lcd.aspx?lcdId=35456&ver=66> Revision date 03/05/2026. Last accessed 03/05/2026

Shanahan EM, Robinson L, Lyne S, et al. Genicular nerve block for pain management in patients with knee osteoarthritis: a randomized placebo-controlled trial. Arthritis Rheumatol. 2023; 75(2):201-209. Accessed 06/25/24.

Tan YL, Neo EJR, Wee TC. Ultrasound-guided genicular nerve blockade with pharmacological agents for chronic knee osteoarthritis; a systemic review . Pain Physician . 2022; 25(4):E489-E502. Accessed 06/27/24.

Optum Current Procedural Coding Expert CPT® codes with Medicare essentials for enhanced accuracy. 2024.

## POST PAYMENT AUDIT STATEMENT

The medical record must include documentation that reflects the medical necessity criteria and is subject to audit by THP at any time pursuant to the terms of your provider agreement.

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