

# 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?

Starting January 1, 2019, and 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 to a specialist and will pay their specialist cost-sharing.



Learn more about your acupuncture benefits.

**Call 1-800-ASK-BLUE  
(1-800-275-2583).**

#### 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 Independence Medical Policy at [ibx.com/medpolicy](http://ibx.com/medpolicy) to determine the conditions for which acupuncture is considered medically necessary.
- Find the right practitioner. Talk to your doctor 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](http://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 #12.00.01f on [ibx.com](http://ibx.com) under the Member Resources tab. This plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.  
English: 1-877-764-6605 (TTY: 1-800-770-5531)  
Spanish: ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, cuenta con servicios de asistencia en idiomas disponibles de forma gratuita para usted. Llame al 1-800-275-2583 (TTY: 711).  
Chinese: 注意: 如果您讲中文, 您可以得到免费的语言协助服务。请致电1-800-275-2583。

