SUBJECT: GENICULAR NERVE BLOCK FOR OSTEOARTHRITIC KNEE PAIN

INCLUDED PRODUCT(S):
- Medicaid
  - BadgerCare Plus
  - Care4Kids Program
- Individual and Family
  - Commercial
  - Marketplace

PURPOSE OR DESCRIPTION:
The purpose of this policy is to define criteria for the medical necessity of genicular nerve block for severe osteoarthritic (OA) knee pain. There is currently insufficient published evidence to support genicular nerve blocks for management of knee pain; however, there is some evidence that peripheral nerve radiofrequency ablation (RFA) may improve knee pain and function. Therefore, genicular nerve block may be indicated as a diagnostic step to ensure that blocking the nerve would provide therapeutic benefit.

POLICY:
There is currently no MCG Careweb guideline on genicular nerve blocks. This CCHP policy will be used to determine the medical necessity of genicular nerve blocks:

Genicular nerve blocks may be indicated when ALL of the following are present:

1. Diagnostic genicular nerve block is needed to confirm that blocking the nerve provides pain relief
2. Patient is a candidate for genicular nerve RFA, as indicated by ALL of the following:
   a. Chronic OA knee pain (at least 3 months' duration)
b. Failure of 3 months or more of nonoperative management, as indicated by ONE of the following:
   i. Exercise program
   ii. Weight loss
   iii. Pharmacotherapy
   iv. Corticosteroid injection

c. Imaging studies have ruled out other causes of knee pain (eg fracture, tumor)
d. No coagulopathy
e. No current infection

REFERENCES:
1. Peripheral Nerve Ablation for Treatment of Osteoarthritic Knee Pain. Hayes, a Division of TractManager. Copyright © 2019 TractManager September 19, 2017