

Eligibility criteria for basivertebral nerve ablation

Southern Cross will only reimburse the cost of basivertebral nerve ablation under a member's policy when criteria 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 below are met for that member.

- 1. Diagnosis of chronic lower back pain for at least six months.
- 2. Referral from specialist spine surgeon to interventional radiologist or pain specialist.
- 3. Failure to respond to at least six months of non-operative conservative treatment.
- 4. A score of 30 or more points on the Oswestry Disability Index.
- Modic changes (type 1 or 2) in at least one vertebral endplate, at one or more levels from L3 to S1.

The cost of basivertebral nerve ablation will **not** be reimbursed if any of the following are present for the member:

- radicular pain by history or evidence of pain neurological deficit within the past year
- surgery has previously been performed on the lumbar spine
- current or history of symptomatic spinal stenosis
- current or history of osteoporotic or tumor-related vertebral body compression fracture
- current or history of vertebral cancer or spinal metastasis
- current or history of spinal infection
- metabolic bone disease
- BMI equal to or greater than 40
- any radiographic evidence of other important back pathology
- MRI evidence of Modic changes, Type 1 or 2 at greater than 3 vertebral bodies or at non-consecutive levels, or at vertebral bodies other than L3 to S1
- any back pathology related to trauma, evidence of vertebral compression fracture or other spinal pathology that could affect an assessment of response to back pain
- patient is bed bound
- patient demonstrates three or more Waddell's signs of Inorganic Behaviour
- any evidence of current systemic infection.

Please also ensure you are familiar with all policy exclusions, including:

- Acute care
- Congenital conditions
- Cosmetic treatment/procedures
- Health screening
- Treatment of any condition not detrimental to health
- Unapproved healthcare services.

Refer to the relevant policy document for specific conditions and exceptions that apply to these exclusions.