

## Acupuncture

### Benefit Coverage

Acupuncture with unlimited visits is included in IFP and Small Business HMO on and off exchange plans for treatment of nausea and as part of a chronic pain management program. These benefits are through American Specialty Health Plans (ASH Plans) when provided by an American Specialty Health Group, Inc. (ASH Group) participating provider. This benefit includes an initial examination and subsequent office visits and acupuncture services specifically for the treatment of nausea and as part of a chronic pain management program and must be determined as Medically Necessary by ASH Plans. A referral from the member's Blue Shield HMO Primary Care Physician is not required. The ASH Group provider will refer the member to the Primary Care Physician for evaluation of conditions not related to chronic pain or nausea and for evaluation of non-covered services such as diagnostic scanning (CAT scans or MRIs).

ASH Plans must determine all subsequent services as Medically Necessary following the initial examination and emergency services by an ASH Group provider.

The standard HMO Mid and Large Group plans do not include services for or incidental to acupuncture.

Some HMO Mid and Large Group plans have the optional chiropractic and acupuncture benefits through ASH Plans when provided by an ASH Group participating provider. The benefits are similar to the above with the exceptions that the optional chiropractic and acupuncture benefit visit limits and copayments vary and services for Acupuncture include treatment for neuromusculoskeletal disorders. Refer to the member's EOC for details or call ASH Plans at (800) 678-9133.

HMO members may receive discounted acupuncture, chiropractic, and therapeutic massage services through the Alternative Care Discount Program on [blueshieldca.com](https://blueshieldca.com). Simply log on to [blueshieldca.com](https://blueshieldca.com), click on the *Be Well* tab at the top of the screen, then *Wellness Discount Programs*, then *Alternative Care*.

### Copayment

See the member's *Evidence of Coverage (EOC)* and *Summary of Benefits and Coverage* for member copayments.

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### Benefit Exclusions

- Standard HMO Mid and Large plans, services for or incidental to acupuncture
- Massage therapy provided by a massage therapist
- Services administered by an acupuncturist or chiropractor not in the ASH Group

### Examples of Covered Services

Initial examination and subsequent office visits and acupuncture services specifically for the treatment of nausea and as part of a chronic pain management program, when determined by ASH Plans as Medically Necessary.

### Examples of Non-Covered Services

- Cupping
- Electroacupuncture
- Moxibustion

### References

*Combined Evidence of Coverage and Disclosure Form*

*IFP Evidence of Coverage and Health Service Agreement*

*Alternative Care Discount Program on blueshieldca.com*

*HMO Optional Benefits: Chiropractic and Acupuncture rider offered by American Specialty Health Plans (ASH Plans)*