



Vagus Nerve Stimulation for Epilepsy

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Definitions

Vagus nerve stimulation (VNS)	Involves the placement of stimulator leads, hooked around the left vagus nerve in the neck, and the implantation of a programmable stimulator in the chest wall. Stimuli are delivered through the implanted hardware. VNS received FDA approval as an "adjunctive treatment of adults and adolescents over 12 years of age with medically refractory partial-onset seizures."
Partial-onset seizure	A focal onset in one area of the brain, which may or may not involve motor control loss or alteration of consciousness. Partial-onset seizures may be simple, complex or complex partial seizures, secondarily generalized.
Medically refractory seizures	Occur despite treatment with therapeutic levels of antiepileptic drugs or seizures that cannot be treated with therapeutic levels of antiepileptic drugs because of intolerable adverse side effects.

Guideline

VNS for epilepsy is covered for medically refractory partial-onset seizures when surgery is not recommended or has failed. In addition, **all** of the following criteria must be met:

1. Age > 12 years.
2. Seizures that have been refractory to two trials of combination therapy, including both conventional and newer anticonvulsant drugs.
3. Nonepileptic seizures and behavioral aberrations (including self-injurious behavior) have been ruled out.
4. Members must undergo a quality of life (QOL) assessment. The treating physician must have reason to believe that VNS will cause QOL improvement and must clearly document this finding in the medical record.
5. Primary generalized seizure has been ruled out.
6. Member must not be a candidate for epilepsy surgery.

Note: When mental retardation (MR) and epilepsy coexist, the treating physician must document how VNS will be beneficial to the member despite the MR presence. This applies to the presence of psychosis as well.

Limitations/Exclusions

VNS is not considered medically necessary for any of the following conditions:

1. Other types of seizure disorders that are medically refractory and for which surgery is not recommended or has failed.
2. Progressive disorders (eg., malignant brain neoplasm, Rasmussen's encephalitis, Landau-Kleffner syndrome and progressive metabolic and degenerative disorders).

Applicable Procedure Codes

61885	Insertion or replacement of cranial neurostimulator pulse generator or receiver, direct or inductive coupling; with connection to a single electrode array
61886	Insertion or replacement of cranial neurostimulator pulse generator or receiver, direct or inductive coupling; with connection to 2 or more electrode arrays
61888	Revision or removal of cranial neurostimulator pulse generator or receiver
64553	Percutaneous implantation of neurostimulator electrode array; cranial nerve
64568	Incision for implantation of cranial nerve (eg, vagus nerve) neurostimulator electrode array and pulse generator
64569	Revision or replacement of cranial nerve (eg, vagus nerve) neurostimulator electrode array, including connection to existing pulse generator
64570	Removal of cranial nerve (eg, vagus nerve) neurostimulator electrode array and pulse generator
95970	Electronic analysis of implanted neurostimulator pulse generator system (eg, rate, pulse amplitude and duration, configuration of wave form, battery status, electrode selectability, output modulation, cycling, impedance and patient compliance measurements); simple or complex brain, spinal cord, or peripheral (ie, cranial nerve, peripheral nerve, autonomic nerve, neuromuscular) neurostimulator pulse generator/transmitter, without reprogramming
95974	Electronic analysis of implanted neurostimulator pulse generator system (eg, rate, pulse amplitude and duration, configuration of wave form, battery status, electrode selectability, output modulation, cycling, impedance and patient compliance measurements); complex cranial nerve neurostimulator pulse generator/transmitter, with intraoperative or subsequent programming, with or without nerve interface testing, first hour
95975	Electronic analysis of implanted neurostimulator pulse generator system (eg, rate, pulse amplitude and duration, configuration of wave form, battery status, electrode selectability, output modulation, cycling, impedance and patient compliance measurements); complex cranial nerve neurostimulator pulse generator/transmitter, with intraoperative or subsequent programming, each additional 30 minutes after first hour (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
L8680	Implantable neurostimulator electrode, each revised code
L8681	Patient programmer (external) for use with implantable programmable neurostimulator pulse generator, replacement only.
L8682	Implantable neurostimulator radiofrequency receiver
L8683	Radiofrequency transmitter (external) for use with implantable neurostimulator radiofrequency receiver
L8685	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, single array, rechargeable, includes extension
L8686	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, single array, non-rechargeable, includes extension
L8687	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, dual array, rechargeable, includes extension
L8688	Implantable neurostimulator pulse generator, dual array, non-rechargeable, includes extension
L8689	External recharging system for battery (internal) for use with implantable neurostimulator, replacement only

Applicable ICD-10 Codes

G40.001	Localization-related (focal) (partial) idiopathic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with seizures of localized onset, not intractable, with status epilepticus
G40.009	Localization-related (focal) (partial) idiopathic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with seizures of localized onset, not intractable, without status epilepticus
G40.011	Localization-related (focal) (partial) idiopathic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with seizures of localized onset, intractable, with status epilepticus
G40.019	Localization-related (focal) (partial) idiopathic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with seizures of localized onset, intractable, without status epilepticus
G40.101	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with simple partial seizures, not intractable, with status epilepticus
G40.109	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with simple partial seizures, not intractable, without status epilepticus
G40.111	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with simple partial seizures, intractable, with status epilepticus
G40.119	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with simple partial seizures, intractable, without status epilepticus
G40.201	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with complex partial seizures, not intractable, with status epilepticus
G40.209	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with complex partial seizures, not intractable, without status epilepticus
G40.211	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with complex partial seizures, intractable, with status epilepticus
G40.219	Localization-related (focal) (partial) symptomatic epilepsy and epileptic syndromes with complex partial seizures, intractable, without status epilepticus

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Specialty-matched clinical peer review.

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