

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.
5. 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.