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## Subject: Frenectomy or Frenotomy for Ankyloglossia (Tongue-Tie) in Newborns, Children, & Adolescents

THIS MEDICAL COVERAGE GUIDELINE IS NOT AN AUTHORIZATION, CERTIFICATION, EXPLANATION OF BENEFITS, OR A GUARANTEE OF PAYMENT, NOR DOES IT SUBSTITUTE FOR OR CONSTITUTE MEDICAL ADVICE. ALL MEDICAL DECISIONS ARE SOLELY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PATIENT AND PHYSICIAN. BENEFITS ARE DETERMINED BY THE GROUP CONTRACT, MEMBER BENEFIT BOOKLET, AND/OR INDIVIDUAL SUBSCRIBER CERTIFICATE IN EFFECT AT THE TIME SERVICES WERE RENDERED. THIS MEDICAL COVERAGE GUIDELINE APPLIES TO ALL LINES OF BUSINESS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED IN THE PROGRAM EXCEPTIONS SECTION.

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### DESCRIPTION:

The lingual frenum is the small band of tissue connecting the tongue to the floor of the mouth. [Ankyloglossia](#), also known as “tongue-tie”, is a congenital condition in newborns and children caused by a [frenum](#) of the tongue that is abnormally short or is attached too close to the tip of the tongue. Ankyloglossia can impair the normal movement of the tongue and interfere with speech or newborn feeding.

This condition may be surgically corrected, often as an office procedure in neonates, by simple excision (i.e. [frenectomy](#), frenotomy). Older children require division or excision of the frenulum to be performed in the operating room because the frenulum is thicker and more vascular, requiring surgical correction that includes simple division either with or without a Z-plasty repair.

### POSITION STATEMENT:

Lingual frenectomy, lingual frenotomy (i.e., frenulectomy), frenum incision/excision, or [frenoplasty](#) to treat ankyloglossia **meets the definition of medical necessity** when newborn feeding difficulties or childhood and adolescent articulation problems are present.

All other indications, including surgical correction of ankyloglossia to resolve speech pathology, are considered **experimental or investigational**. There is insufficient clinical evidence to permit conclusions on net health outcomes.

## BILLING/CODING INFORMATION:

### CPT Coding:

40806	Incision of labial frenum (frenotomy)
40819	Excision of frenum, labial or buccal (frenumectomy, frenulectomy, frenectomy)
41010	Incision of lingual frenum (frenotomy)
41115	Excision of lingual frenum (frenectomy)
41520	Frenoplasty (surgical revision of frenum, e.g., with Z-plasty)

### ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes That Support edical Necessity:

Q18.9	Congenital malformation of face and neck, unspecified
Q38.1	Ankyloglossia
Q38.6	Other congenital malformations of mouth

## REIMBURSEMENT INFORMATION:

Refer to section entitled [POSITION STATEMENT](#).

### PROGRAM EXCEPTIONS:

Federal Employee Program (FEP): Follow FEP guidelines.

State Account Organization (SAO): Follow SAO guidelines.

**Medicare Advantage products:** No National Coverage Determination (NCD) and/or Local Coverage Determination (LCD) were found at the time of the last guideline reviewed date.

If this Medical Coverage Guideline contains a step therapy requirement, in compliance with Florida law 627.42393, members or providers may request a step therapy protocol exemption to this requirement if based on medical necessity. The process for requesting a protocol exemption can be found at [Coverage Protocol Exemption Request](#)

### DEFINITIONS:

**Ankyloglossia:** a severe restriction of tongue movement as a result of fusion or adherence of the tongue to the floor of the mouth. Partial ankyloglossia (also called tongue-tie) is caused by a frenum of the tongue that is abnormally short or is attached too close to the tip of the tongue; this condition may be surgically corrected by simple excision. Complete ankyloglossia requires extensive surgical reconstruction of the tongue and the floor of the mouth.

**Buccal frenum:** a fold or band of mucous membrane connecting the alveolar ridge to the cheek and separating the labial vestibule from the buccal vestibule.

**Frenum, lingual (frenulum):** the vertical band of oral mucosa connecting the tongue with the floor of the oral cavity and the alveolar or residual alveolar ridge.

**Frenectomy:** surgical excision of a frenum (frenulum).

**Frenoplasty, frenuloplasty:** surgical correction of an abnormally attached frenum.

**Frenotomy:** a surgical procedure for repairing a defective frenum, such as the cutting or lengthening of the lingual frenum to correct ankyloglossia.

**Labial frenum:** Folds of mucous membrane extending from gingiva to midline of lower and upper lips, respectively.

**Lingual:** pertaining to or near the tongue; also referred to as glossal.

## RELATED GUIDELINES:

None

## OTHER:

None

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### COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

This Medical Coverage Guideline (MCG) was approved by the Florida Blue Medical Policy and Coverage Committee on 02/27/25.

### GUIDELINE UPDATE INFORMATION:

03/15/15	New Medical Coverage Guideline; formatting changes.
11/01/15	Revision: ICD-9 Codes deleted.
04/15/16	Annual review; position statement section, coding, and references updated; formatting changes.
10/01/16	Revision; formatting changes.
08/15/17	Revision; coding section updated.
11/15/18	Review; position statements maintained and references updated.
04/15/20	Review; position statements maintained; title and references updated.
03/15/22	Review: Position statements maintained and references updated.
05/25/23	Update to Program Exceptions section.
01/01/24	Position statements maintained.
03/15/25	Review: Position statements maintained; references updated.