American Chiropractic College of Infrared Imaging (ACCII) / American Chiropractic College of Thermography (ACCT)
POSITION STATEMENT

POLICY STATEMENT ON THERMOGRAPHY

- High Resolution Infrared (HRI) Imaging (electronic infrared thermography) is a diagnostic procedure which measures skin surface temperature. It is germane to chiropractic practice in cases where a physiologic test is required for the diagnosis of selected neurological and musculoskeletal conditions.
- High Resolution Infrared Imaging requires a high level of operator and interpreter competency and an adherence to established and consistent protocol.
- The results of High Resolution Infrared Imaging must be property correlated with a thorough history, all appropriate clinical examination, and other diagnostic studies/tests as may be indicated by clinical necessity. In this setting, High Resolution Infrared Imaging may be an aid in establishing a differentiated diagnosis and in determining prognosis.

GUIDELINES FOR THERMOGRAPHY IN CHIROPRACTIC PRACTICE

Thermographic Description

Thermography is a diagnostic procedure which measures skin surface temperature distribution.

Thermographic Policy

This diagnostic imaging procedure is germane to chiropractic practice in cases where a physiologic test is required. High Resolution Infrared (HRI) Imaging* is a procedure for the diagnosis of selected neurological and musculoskeletal conditions.

*Electronic Infrared Thermography

Guidelines for Determining Medical Necessity

The treating doctor shall certify as to the medical necessity of the thermographic study based upon a diagnostic clinical question and the effect of the results on case management decisions. The referring doctor shall certify to the medical necessity by prescription.

HRI Imaging is of value in the diagnostic evaluation of patients when the clinical history suggests the presence of one of the following situations:

1. Early diagnosis and monitoring of reflex sympathetic dystrophy syndromes.
2. Evaluation of spinal nerve root/fiber irritation and distal peripheral nerve fiber pathology for detection of sensory/autonomic dysfunction.
3. To evaluate and monitor soft tissue injuries, including segmental dysfunction/subluxation, sprain, and myofacial conditions (strains and myofacial pain syndromes) not responding to clinical treatment.
4. To evaluate for the physiological significance of equivocal or minor anatomical findings seen on Myelogram, CT and/or MRI.
5. To evaluate for feigned disorders.

Utilization Review

Because of the detailed knowledge, training, and skill level required, thermographic studies ordered, produced or interpreted by chiropractic physicians must be reviewed only by a licensed chiropractor who holds appropriate** credentials with regard to knowledge, skill and experience in thermography. Only licensed chiropractors holding such credentials can claim sufficient competence to make valid judgments or comments regarding appropriateness, necessity or accuracy of thermographic studies, and their relevance to chiropractic case management.

**Board Certified status with the American Chiropractic Board of Thermography or other national thermographic certifying board which restricts its examination to candidates who have completed a prescribed postgraduate syllabus program offered by a chiropractic college having status with a national chiropractic accrediting agency approved by the United States Department of Education (USDE).