

OXYGEN AND OXYGEN SUPPLIES

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I. PROCEDURE CODES

HCPSC Level II Codes A4610-A4629, E0424-E0480, E1353-E1399, E1400-E1406, J2410, J2460, J2590, J3550

II. POLICY

Oxygen is a prescription medication and the following benefits may be cost-shared:

- A. Oxygen and the supplies and equipment related to its administration;
- B. Oxygen in gas (to include oxygen concentrators) and liquid form;
- C. Stationary and/or portable oxygen units; and
- D. Oxygen therapy for migraine and/or cluster headaches.

III. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

A. Claims for oxygen must include a physician's prescription written within 30 days prior to the initial delivery of oxygen with the following information:

- 1. The patient's diagnosis which requires the use of oxygen;
- 2. Oxygen flow rate, frequency and duration of use;
- 3. Estimated length of time oxygen will be required; and
- 4. Method of oxygen delivery.

B. The physician's prescription for a portable oxygen system must include the circumstances under which the portable system will be used; i.e., the medical purpose to be served by the portable oxygen which cannot be met by the stationary system.

C. If the initial prescription shows an indefinite or lifetime need for oxygen, a new prescription is not required as long as the diagnosis substantiates its continued use.

D. Oxygen concentrators are to be cost-shared on a rental basis. The durable medical equipment cost-sharing policy will not apply even though the purchase price for this equipment has been reached. Cost-sharing on a rental basis is necessary as oxygen concentrators require frequent periodic maintenance and frequent checks to ensure that the liter flow setting of the oxygen concentrator has not been altered.

E. Claims with an unusual amount of oxygen or deluxe equipment should be reviewed for medical necessity.

F. Related Issuances.

1. [Chapter 1, Section 26.6](#), HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY;
2. [Chapter 3, Section 4.3](#), TRANSTRACHEAL OXYGEN THERAPY;
3. [Chapter 8, Section 14.1](#), UNPROVEN DEVICES, MEDICAL TREATMENT, AND PROCEDURES for information about topical application of oxygen; and
4. [Chapter 13, Section 3.3](#), OXYGEN AND RELATED SUPPLIES for information about reimbursement of oxygen and related equipment and supplies.

IV. EXCEPTIONS

A. Oxygen is generally limited to a 30 day supply. If, however, the oxygen is supplied only in amounts greater than a 30 day supply, TRICARE/CHAMPUS may cost-share the greater amount.

B. TRICARE/CHAMPUS may cost-share up to one stationary tank unit and one portable oxygen unit per beneficiary.

C. Repairs and adjustments of oxygen equipment are limited to those repairs and adjustments required to make the oxygen equipment serviceable.

V. EXCLUSIONS

The following are not covered:

- A. Spare oxygen supplies kept at a separate location.
- B. Pre-set portable oxygen units are not covered. A pre-set unit is primarily designed and meant to be a first aid item and not for long-term therapy.
- C. Regulators that permit a flow rate greater than 8 liters per minute.
- D. Oxygen (95%) and carbon dioxide (5%) inhalation therapy for inner ear disease. The therapeutic benefit derived from this procedure is not established.
- E. The purchasing of maintenance agreements for oxygen equipment.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE **April 29, 1980.**

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