

MP.008.MPC – Home Apnea Monitoring

Maryland Physicians Care considers **Home Apnea Monitors** medically necessary when they are equipped with an event recorder and are indicated for a limited period of time for infants 12 months of age or younger with *any* of the following indications:

- An infant who has experienced an apparent life-threatening event (ALTE), OR
- Premature infants who are at high risk for recurrent episodes of apnea, OR
- Bradycardia to less than 80 beats per minute, and hypoxia, oxygen saturation below 90%, after discharge from the hospital, OR
- Infants who are technology dependent – tracheostomy, Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP), or mechanical ventilation, OR
- Infants with unstable airways, OR
- Infants with neurologic or metabolic disorders affecting respiratory control or rare medical conditions that affect regulation of breathing, OR
- Chronic lung disease, OR
- Infants with confirmed diagnosis of pertussis, OR
- Later siblings of infants who died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) until the siblings are one month older than the age at which the earlier sibling died and they remain event free.

AND

The physician must establish a specific plan for periodic review and criteria for termination of the home monitor before initiating therapy. Parents require supportive care and education and need to be advised that home monitoring has never been demonstrated to reduce the rate of mortality caused by Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Infant apnea monitors are experimental and investigational for all other indications because their effectiveness for indications other than the ones listed above has not been established.

Limitations

1. Home apnea monitors should be discontinued after infants are event-free (no episodes of apnea/bradycardia) for six weeks and post-conception age of 43 weeks.
2. The use of the apnea monitor is not indicated for the sole purpose of prevention of SIDS without a history of sibling SIDS.
3. This policy will follow the capped rental period – see policy PA.010 Durable Medical Equipment and Corrective Appliances.

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Background

The American Academy of Pediatrics defines infant apnea as an unexplained episode of cessation of breathing for 20 seconds or longer, or a shorter respiratory pause associated with bradycardia, cyanosis, pallor, and/or marked hypotonia. Apnea is more common in pre-term infants and rare in full-term healthy infants. It can be classified into three types: central apnea, obstructive apnea, and mixed.

- Central apnea – when the brain temporarily fails to send proper signals to the muscles that control breathing
- Obstructive apnea – when the throat muscles relax and the airway is narrowed and ultimately cutting off breathing. This is the most common form and is characterized by noisy snoring.
- Mixed apnea – is a combination of central and obstructive apnea. It is seen in infants/children who have abnormal control of breathing.

Home monitoring is usually indicated until the child is free of apneic spells for six to eight weeks.

The AAP Task Force on SIDS defines an apparent life-threatening event (ATLE) is defined as an episode that is frightening to the observer and is characterized by some combination of apnea (central or occasionally obstructive), color change (usually cyanotic or pallid but occasionally erythematous or plethoric), marked change in muscle tone (usually marked limpness), choking or gagging.

Codes:

CPT Codes	
Code	Description
94774	Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time includes monitor attachment, download of data, physician review, interpretation, and preparation of a report
94775	Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time: includes monitor attachment only (includes hook-up, initiation of recording and disconnection)
94776	Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time: monitoring, download of information, receipt of transmissions(s) and analyses by computer only
94777	Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time: physician review, interpretation and preparation of report only

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References

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4. Fu LY, Moon RY. Apparent life-threatening events (ALTEs) and the role of home monitors. Pediatr Rev. 2007 Jun; 28(6): 203-208.
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5. Hall KL, Zalman B. Evaluation and management of apparent life-threatening events in children. Am Fam Physician. 2005 Jun; 71(12): 2301-2308.
<http://www.aafp.org/afp/2005/0615/p2301.pdf>
6. Rocker JA, Bechtel KA. Pediatric Apnea. Last updated September 28, 2018.
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