

The following documentation is required to be in clinic visit/therapy notes from the treating provider within 12 months of the prescription for consideration of payment.

For any item to be covered it must be reasonable and necessary for the diagnosis or treatment of illness or injury or to improve the functioning of a malformed body member and meet all other applicable requirements.

Initial coverage of home oxygen therapy and oxygen equipment is reasonable and necessary for Groups I, II and III if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The treating practitioner has ordered and evaluated the results of a qualifying blood gas study performed at the time of need; and,
2. The beneficiary's blood gas study meets the criteria stated below; and,
3. The qualifying blood gas study was performed by a treating practitioner or by a qualified provider or supplier of laboratory services; and,
4. The provision of oxygen and oxygen equipment in the home setting will improve the beneficiary's condition.

Time of need is defined as during the patient's illness when the presumption is that the provision of oxygen will improve the patient's condition in the home setting. For an inpatient hospital patient anticipated to require oxygen upon going home, the time of need would be within 2 days of discharge.

NOTE: When applicable, the beneficiary's medical record must have documentation that describes any concerns for variations in oxygen measurements that may result from such factors as the patient's age, the patient's skin pigmentation, the altitude level, or a decrease in oxygen carrying capacity.

Note: the term blood gas study refers to either an oximetry test or an arterial blood gas test.

Group I criteria include any of the following:

5. An arterial PO₂ at or below 55 mm Hg or an arterial oxygen saturation at or below 88 percent taken at rest (awake) while breathing room air; or,
6. An arterial PO₂ at or below 55 mm Hg, or an arterial oxygen saturation at or below 88 percent, taken during sleep for a beneficiary who demonstrates an arterial PO₂ at or above 56 mm Hg or an arterial oxygen saturation at or above 89 percent while awake. In this instance, oxygen and oxygen equipment is only reasonable and necessary during sleep; or,

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7. A decrease in arterial PO₂ more than 10 mm Hg, or a decrease in arterial oxygen saturation more than 5 percent from baseline saturation, taken during sleep and associated with symptoms of hypoxemia such as impairment of cognitive processes and nocturnal restlessness or insomnia (not all inclusive). In this instance, oxygen and oxygen equipment is only reasonable and necessary during sleep; or,
8. An arterial PO₂ at or below 55 mm Hg or an arterial oxygen saturation at or below 88 percent, taken during exercise for a beneficiary who demonstrates an arterial PO₂ at or above 56 mm Hg or an arterial oxygen saturation at or above 89 percent during the day while at rest. In this instance, portable oxygen and oxygen equipment is only reasonable and necessary while awake and during exercise.

Group II criteria include all of the following:

- A. An arterial PO₂ of 56-59 mm Hg or an arterial blood oxygen saturation of 89 percent; and,
- B. Any of the following:
 - a. Dependent edema suggesting congestive heart failure; or,
 - b. Pulmonary hypertension or cor pulmonale, determined by measurement of pulmonary artery pressure, gated blood pool scan, echocardiogram, or "P" pulmonale on EKG (P wave greater than 3 mm in standard leads II, III, or AVF); or,
 - c. Erythrocythemia with a hematocrit greater than 56 percent.

Group III criteria:

Initial coverage of home oxygen therapy and oxygen equipment is reasonable and necessary for beneficiaries in Group III, if all of the following conditions are met:

9. Absence of hypoxemia defined in Group I and Group II above; and,
10. A medical condition with distinct physiologic, cognitive, and/or functional symptoms documented in high-quality, peer-reviewed literature to be improved by oxygen therapy, such as cluster headaches (not all inclusive).

Group IV criteria:

Oxygen therapy and oxygen equipment will also be denied as not reasonable and necessary if any of the following conditions are present:

11. Angina pectoris in the absence of hypoxemia. This condition is generally not the result of a low oxygen level in the blood and there are other preferred treatments; or,
12. Dyspnea without cor pulmonale or evidence of hypoxemia; or,
13. Severe peripheral vascular disease resulting in clinically evident desaturation in one or more extremities but in the absence of systemic hypoxemia. There is no evidence that increased PO₂ will improve the oxygenation of tissues with impaired circulation; or,
14. Terminal illnesses that do not affect the ability to breathe.