

Nebulizers

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Introduction

This guideline addresses nebulizers.

Health Equity Consideration

Health equity is the highest level of health for all individuals; health inequity is the avoidable difference in health status or distribution of health resources due to the social conditions in which individuals are born, grow, live, work, and age. Social determinants of health are the conditions in the environment that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes and risks. Examples include the following: safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods; racism, discrimination, and violence; education, job opportunities, and income; access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities; access to clean air and water; and language and literacy skills.

Criteria

Small Volume Nebulizers

A small volume nebulizer and related accessories are considered medically necessary for individuals with respiratory conditions who require medication delivered directly to the lungs.

Standard Large Volume Nebulizers

A standard large volume nebulizer and related accessories are considered medically necessary to deliver humidity to an individual with thick, tenacious secretions who has **any** of the following conditions:

- bronchiectasis
- cystic fibrosis (CF)
- tracheostomy
- tracheobronchial stent
- administration of pentamidine in individuals with HIV, pneumocystosis, or post-organ transplantation with complications

Ultrasonic Small Volume Nebulizer

An ultrasonic small volume nebulizer and related accessories are considered medically necessary for delivery of treprostinil in individuals with pulmonary hypertension.

Ultrasonic Large Volume Nebulizer

An ultrasonic large volume nebulizer is considered medically necessary to deliver humidity to an individual with thick, tenacious secretions when there is documentation of **both** of the following:

- The use of a standard large volume nebulizer has failed to control the individual's medical condition(s).
- The individual has **any** of the following medical condition(s):
 - bronchiectasis
 - cystic fibrosis (CF)
 - tracheostomy
 - tracheobronchial stent
 - administration of pentamidine in members with HIV, pneumocystosis, or post-organ transplantation with complications

Controlled Dose Inhalation Drug Delivery System

A controlled dose inhalation drug delivery system and related accessories are considered medically necessary for delivery of iloprost for individuals with pulmonary hypertension.

Not Medically Necessary

A pre-filled disposable large-volume nebulizer is considered not medically necessary because it is a convenience item.

Accessories

Accessories are considered medically necessary when they are required for the effective use and function of a medically necessary aerosol compressor. The following table identifies the compressor/generator and the associated accessories.

Compressor/Generator	Related Accessories
E0570	A7003, A7004, A7005, A7006, A7013, A7015, A7525
E0565	A4619, A7006, A7007, A7010, A7012, A7013, A7014, A7015, A7017, A7525, E1372

Compressor/Generator	Related Accessories
E0572	A7006, A7007, A7014, A7017
E0585	A4619, A7006, A7010, A7012, A7013, A7014, A7015, A7525
E0574	A7013, A7014, A7016
K0730	A7005

Evidence Discussion

A 2025 consensus guideline (Guleria et al.) synthesized available evidence and expert opinion regarding home maintenance nebulization (HMN) in individuals with obstructive airway diseases, emphasizing clinical selection and appropriate use rather than generating new quantitative outcome data. The panel reported that HMN had been increasingly utilized in individuals with asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease who were unable to effectively use handheld inhalers, particularly those with severe disease, impaired coordination, or insufficient inspiratory flow. The recommendations indicated that HMN could improve medication delivery and adherence when therapy was individualized, with effectiveness assessed through symptom control, lung function monitoring, and adherence over time. The guideline concluded that home nebulization represented a valuable component of long term respiratory management and could enhance quality of life when used in appropriately selected individuals, but should not replace inhaler therapy indiscriminately and required regular reassessment for continued need and safe use. Key limitations included reliance on expert consensus methodology rather than randomized controlled trials, heterogeneity in available supporting evidence, and a lack of robust long term comparative effectiveness data, which limited the ability to quantify clinical outcomes and generalize recommendations across all populations. The COPD Foundation Nebulizer Consortium guideline (Biney et al., 2024) reviewed available literature and expert input to develop recommendations regarding the safe administration of nebulized therapies in both healthcare and home environments, with a particular focus on infection risk mitigation. The authors found that evidence regarding increased transmission of respiratory infections during nebulizer use was inconclusive, and that avoidance of nebulized therapy could adversely affect individuals who depended on this modality for effective medication delivery. The panel emphasized that nebulizers continued to play an important role in managing chronic respiratory conditions and recommended specific strategies to reduce aerosol dispersion in the home setting, including use of appropriate interfaces, environmental controls, and adherence to infection prevention practices. The guideline concluded that nebulized therapy could be used safely in the home when proper precautions were implemented, and that individualized risk assessment and education were essential

to maintaining both treatment effectiveness and safety. Key limitations included the reliance on heterogeneous and limited-quality evidence, particularly related to infection transmission risk, as well as the absence of robust quantitative data directly comparing outcomes across delivery modalities, which restricted the ability to draw definitive conclusions regarding relative safety and efficacy

Codes Addressed in This Guideline

The inclusion of any code in this table does not imply that the code is under management or requires prior authorization. Refer to the applicable health plan for management details. Prior authorization of a code listed in this table is not a guarantee of payment. The Certificate of Coverage or Evidence of Coverage policy outlines the terms and conditions of the member's health insurance policy.

HCPCS Codes	Description
A7008	Large volume nebulizer, disposable, prefilled, used with aerosol compressor
E0565	Compressor, air power source for equipment which is not self-contained or cylinder driven
E0570	Nebulizer, with compressor
E0572	Aerosol compressor, adjustment pressure, light dty for intermittent use
E0574	Ultrasonic/electronic generator with small volume nebulizer
E0575	Nebulizer; ultrasonic, large volume
E0585	Nebulizer, with compressor and heater
K0730	Controlled dose inhalation drug delivery system

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