

**Medical Policy: Peak Flow Meters**

Effective: 11/8/2001

Reviewed/Revised: 7/16/2004

Reviewed/No Updates: 11/7/2011, 4/17/2012,  
1/28/13, 2/13/14, 2/12/15, 2/11/16, 2/9/17, 2/8/18,  
2/14/19, 2/13/20, 2/11/21, 2/17/22, 2/2/23, 2/8/24,  
2/20/25

## PEAK FLOW METERS

### Policy

VCHCP considers peak flow meters to be durable medical equipment (DME)<sup>1</sup>. DME is defined as equipment that serves a medical purpose, is able to withstand repeated use, and is appropriate for use in the home setting.

VCHCP will cover standard mechanical peak flow meters for eligible members with asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, or other obstructive pulmonary conditions to monitor the severity of their disease and their response to therapy. VCHCP does NOT cover electronic peak flow meters. There is inadequate evidence to show that electronic peak flow meters, such as the PeakLog Peak Flow Chronologger or the AirWatch Peak Flow Monitoring System, are associated with superior health benefits when compared to standard mechanical peak flow meters.

### Procedure

A treatment authorization request (TAR) must be submitted to UR for approval.

**Place of Service:** Outpatient

**A. Attachments:** None

### B. History:

Reviewers: Richard O. Ashby MD & Thomas Brugman MD; November 2001

Committee Review: QAC: November 2001

David Chernof, MD & Chris Landon, MD; July 2004

Committee Review: UM: November 08, 2004

Reviewed/No Updates: Faustine Dela Cruz, RN & Albert Reeves, MD; November 7, 2011

Committee Review: UM: November 10, 2011; QAC: November 22, 2011

Reviewed/No Updates: Albert Reeves, MD; April 17, 2012

Committee Reviews: UM: May 10, 2012; QAC: May 22, 2012

Reviewed/No Updates: Albert Reeves, MD; January 28, 2013

Committee Review: UM: February 14, 2013; QAC: February 26, 2013

Reviewed/No Updates: Catherine Sanders, MD

Committee Review: UM: February 13, 2014; QAC: February 25, 2014

Reviewed/No Updates: Catherine Sanders, MD

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<sup>1</sup> DME is subject to an annual maximum for some plans.<sup>1</sup>

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2/14/19, 2/13/20, 2/11/21, 2/17/22, 2/2/23, 2/8/24,  
2/20/25

Committee Review: UM: February 12, 2015; QAC: February 24, 2015  
Reviewed/No Updates: Faustine Dela Cruz, RN & Catherine Sanders, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 11, 2016; QAC: February 23, 2016  
Reviewed/No Updates: Catherine Sanders, MD & Robert Sterling  
Committee Review: UM: February 9, 2017; QAC: February 28, 2017  
Reviewed/No Updates: Catherine Sanders, MD & Robert Sterling  
Committee Review: UM: February 8, 2018; QAC: February 27, 2018  
Reviewed/No Updates: Catherine Sanders, MD & Robert Sterling, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 14, 2019; QAC: February 26, 2019  
Reviewed/No Updates: Howard Taekman, MD & Robert Sterling, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 13, 2020; QAC: February 25, 2020  
Reviewed/No Updates: Howard Taekman, MD & Robert Sterling, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 11, 2021; QAC: February 23, 2021  
Reviewed/No Updates: Howard Taekman, MD & Robert Sterling, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 17, 2022; QAC: February 22, 2022  
Reviewed/No Updates: Howard Taekman, MD & Robert Sterling, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 2, 2023; QAC: February 7, 2023  
Reviewed/No Updates: Howard Taekman, MD & Robert Sterling, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 8, 2024; QAC: February 27, 2024  
Reviewed/Updated by: Howard Taekman, MD & Robert Sterling, MD  
Committee Review: UM: February 20, 2025; QAC: February 25, 2025

**C. References:**

1. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Asthma Education Program, Expert Panel Report, "Patient Education," Ch. V. in "Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma," *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology* 88(3):460-472, 1991.
2. Gibson, G.J., *Clinical Tests of Respiratory Function*, 2nd Ed. (New York, NY: Chapman & Hall Medical, 1996), pp. 3-6.
3. ENACT Health Management Systems, *Comparisons of the AirWatch Monitor with Mechanical Peak Flow Meters and Diagnostic Spirometers: Preliminary Results of Human Trials and Laboratory Experiments*, Revision 1.0 (Raleigh, NC: ENACT Health Management Systems, March 1996).
4. Butt, T., Apter, A., Reisine, S., et al., "An Evaluation of a Portable Electronic Flow Meter," abstract presented at "Asthma '95: Theory to Treatment," Joint Conference Sponsored by the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology and the American Thoracic Society, Chicago, IL, July 15-17, 1995.

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5. Quirce, S., Contreras, G., Moran, O., et al., "Laboratory and Clinical Evaluation of a Portable Computerized Peak Flow Meter," *Journal of Asthma* 34(4):305-312, 1997.
6. Godschalk, I., Brackel, H.J., Peters, J.C., et al., "Assessment of Accuracy and Applicability of a Portable Electronic Diary Card Spirometer for Asthma Treatment," *Respiratory Medicine* 90(10):619-622, 1996.

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Content Revised (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Contributors</b>	<b>Review/Revision Notes</b>
2/9/17	No	Catherine Sanders, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/8/18	No	Catherine Sanders, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/14/19	No	Catherine Sanders, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/13/20	No	Howard Taekman, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/11/21	No	Howard Taekman, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/17/22	No	Howard Taekman, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/2/23	No	Howard Taekman, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/8/24	No	Howard Taekman, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Annual Review
2/20/25	Yes	Howard Taekman, MD; Robert Sterling, MD	Added "DME is defined as equipment that serves a medical purpose, is able to withstand repeated use, and is appropriate for use in the home setting."