



Health & Human Services

## AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED)

Service Authorization Required: Yes

### DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT MANUAL

COVERAGE AND LIMITATION CRITERIA AND POLICIES

EFFECTIVE: May 2017

REVISED: December 2025

### AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) ALSO KNOWN AS A WEARABLE CARDIOVERTER DEFIBRILLATOR (WCD)

A wearable cardioverter defibrillator (WCD) is an external device (vest-like garment) that contains the following components:

- cardiac monitor.
- electrodes.
- alarm system; and
- cardioverter-defibrillator.

The WCD monitors cardiac (heart) rhythm and delivers an electrical shock if a life-threatening ventricular arrhythmia is detected. The WCD is worn continuously, 24 hours per day.

#### Indications and limitations of coverage and medical appropriateness:

- A documented episode of ventricular fibrillation or sustained run of ventricular tachycardia lasting 30 seconds or longer. These dysrhythmias may either be spontaneous or induced during an electrophysiologic (EP) study but may not be due to a transient or reversible cause and not occur during the first 48 hours of an acute myocardial infarction.
- Familial or inherited conditions with a high risk of life-threatening ventricular tachyarrhythmias, such as long QT syndrome, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.
- Either a documented prior myocardial infarction or a dilated cardiomyopathy, and a measured left ventricular ejection fraction of less than or equal to 35%.
- Documentation of a previously implanted defibrillator that, due to infection, injury, or illness, requires a waiting period before ICD reinsertion.
- Documentation of an infection or other temporary medical condition that prevents the initial implantation of an ICD.
- WCD is for rental only and prior approval is given for a maximum time period of three months when the member meets all medical necessities and coverage criteria.



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#### Documentation Requirements:

- A prescription from a prescribing physician/practitioner.
- Medical documentation supporting the need.
- Physician/practitioner exam within 90 days of the service authorization start date.

#### Non-covered:

The FDA has **not** approved use of the WCD for the indications listed below. Therefore, the WCD is not medically necessary and not covered for a member who meets **any one** of the following.

- Meets the criteria for an ICD or already has an ICD implanted and operating.
- Is under 18 years of age.
- Has a vision or hearing problem that may interfere with reading or hearing the WCD messages.
- Is taking medication that would interfere with pushing the response buttons on the WCD alarm module.
- Is unwilling or unable to wear the device continuously, except when bathing or showering.
- Is pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Is of childbearing age and not attempting to prevent pregnancy; or
- Is exposed to excessive electromagnetic interference (EMI) from machinery, such as powerful electric motors, radio transmitters, power lines, or electronic security scanners. EMI can prevent the WCD from detecting an abnormal heart rhythm.

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<b>Date Revised</b>	<b>Revisions</b>	
May 2017	Established criteria as listed in policy	
January 3, 2020	Reviewed. Added new Department logo and changed 60 days to 90 days.	
December 22, 2022	Updated with new logo	
November 29, 2023	Reviewed and reformatted. No changes.	
December 17, 2025	Reviewed and reformatted. Removed the “CMN Required” in the header.	