

Pneumatic Cervical Traction Devices

Last Revision/Review Date: September 19, 2018

P&P # C.11.17

A. Documentation Required:

To facilitate the authorization process referral requests must include the following:

1. The patient's diagnosis and reported symptoms of the illness, injury or malformation; as well as degree and duration of debility; **AND**
2. Documentation of neuroimaging studies of the spine; **AND**
3. Documentation of conditions that prohibit the use of over-the-door cervical traction; **AND**
4. Physical therapy documentation which includes:
 - a. Outpatient therapy provided;
 - b. Response to therapy and conservative measures;
 - c. Response to use of the cervical traction during Physical Therapy.

B. Criteria for Medical Necessity:

Pneumatic cervical traction devices are medically necessary for treating neck pain with radiculopathy, if **ALL** the following criteria are met:

1. The patient has chronic neck pain with radiculopathy lasting at least 3 months; **AND**
2. The patient has had neuroimaging studies of the cervical spine that confirm cervical radiculopathy; **AND**
3. The patient has completed a six-week course of physical therapy in the outpatient setting without relief of symptoms; **AND**
4. The patient has failed medical therapy with oral anti-inflammatory agents, oral corticosteroids or muscle relaxants; **AND**
5. Any **ONE** of the following criteria is met:
 - a. Patient did not tolerate or failed a trial of manual or mechanical (e.g., over-the-door); **OR**
 - b. The patient has temporomandibular joint disease; **OR**
 - c. The patient has kyphosis or protraction of the shoulders making use of a chinstrap impractical; **AND**
6. The patient has had significant improvement in symptoms with a trial of the pneumatic cervical traction device during outpatient physical therapy; **AND**
6. Home pneumatic cervical traction therapy is supervised by a physical therapist.

C. Indications Considered Experimental, Investigational or not Medical Necessary:

1. Neck pain without radiculopathy.
2. Acute neck pain.
3. Lumbar traction.
4. Spinal cord compression by neuroimaging.
5. Large disc protrusion by neuroimaging.

REFERENCES:

- Chiu TT, Ng JK, Walther-Zhang B, Lin RJ, Orтели K, Chua SK. A randomized controlled trial on the efficacy of intermittent cervical traction for patients with chronic neck pain. Clin Rehab. 2011; 25:814-822.
- Cleland JA, Whitman JM, Fritz JM, Palmer JA. Manual physical therapy, cervical traction, and strengthening exercises in patients with cervical radiculopathy: A case series. J Orthop Sports Phys Ther. 2005; 35(12):802-811.
- Hayes, Inc. Technology At A Glance. Home-Based Cervical Traction for Treatment of Neck Pain. Publication date December 2013. Annual Review November 17, 2015. Archived January 20, 2017.
- Hayes, Inc. Technology At A Glance. Outpatient Cervical Traction for Treatment of Neck Pain. Publication date December 2013. Annual Review November 16, 2015. Archived January 17, 2017.
- Hayes, Inc. Technology At A Glance. Powered Traction using the DX2 Decompression System (Dynatronics Corporation) for Treatment of Low Back Pain; January 19, 2017.
- Leonard, James, MD in Rehabilitation Medicine at UW Hospital and Clinics. August 2013.
- UpToDate®. Treatment of Acute Low Back Pain. Knight CL, et al. Updated Dec 6, 2017. Accessed September 6, 2018.
- UpToDate®. Treatment and Prognosis of cervical radiculopathy. Robinson J & Kothari MJ. Updated August 31, 2018. Accessed September 6, 2018.
- UpToDate®. Subacute and Chronic Low Back Pain: Nonpharmacologic and Pharmacologic Treatment; Chou R, Last updated August 29, 2018. Accessed September 6, 2018.