

Plain English Summary

Positive airway pressure for moderate-to-severe obstructive sleep apnoea

What does the guidance say?

Positive airway pressure (PAP) devices are recommended for government subsidy for patients with moderate-to-severe obstructive sleep apnoea who meet certain criteria.

Subsidy only applies to the Resmed AirSense 10 AutoSet model.

What is obstructive sleep apnoea?

Obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA) is a condition where the muscles in your throat relax too much during sleep, causing your airway to become partly or fully blocked. When this happens, your breathing slows down or stops for a short time. Your body then wakes you up so you can start breathing again. This can happen many times during the night. People with sleep apnoea often snore loudly or make gasping, snorting or choking sounds while asleep. Because their sleep is often disturbed, they may feel very tired during the day. This can affect concentration, mood, and overall quality of life and can also increase the risk of motor vehicle accidents. If left untreated, OSA can lead to serious health problems including high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and in severe cases, even early death.

Doctors can diagnose sleep apnoea using a sleep study test. During this test, you wear special devices while you sleep that monitor your breathing, heart rate, and other body functions. The results show how often your breathing stops or slows during the night, which helps doctors understand how severe your condition is. OSA is considered moderate if breathing stops 15 to 30 times per hour, and severe if breathing stops more than 30 times per hour during sleep.

What is a positive airway pressure device?

Positive airway pressure (PAP) devices help you breathe more easily while you sleep. They work by blowing a gentle stream of air through a tube connected to a mask that fits over your nose or mouth. This steady flow of air keeps your throat open, preventing it from collapsing and stopping your breathing during sleep.

There are different types of PAP devices. Continuous PAP (CPAP) devices deliver a constant, steady level of air pressure while you breathe in and out. Automatic PAP (APAP) devices automatically adjust the air pressure throughout the night based on your breathing patterns.

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Who can use a PAP device?

Patients aged 16 years and older with moderate-to-severe OSA can use a PAP device if they successfully complete a one-month trial by using the device for at least 4 hours per night, on at least 70% of nights (about 21 out of 30 nights).

Patients are eligible for a one-time subsidy for the Resmed AirSense 10 AutoSet PAP device. Your doctor can advise if it is suitable for you and how often you need to use it to manage your sleep apnoea.

Why were PAP devices recommended for subsidy?

ACE evaluates how well a medical device works in relation to how much it costs compared to the current standard of care. PAP devices were recommended for subsidy because their benefits in reducing the severity of sleep apnoea and excessive daytime sleepiness for certain patients with moderate-to-severe OSA justify their costs compared to usual care such as lifestyle advice on weight loss, alcohol consumption and sleep hygiene.

What does subsidy for this device mean for me?

Subsidy is available for Singaporean citizens receiving outpatient treatment in a public healthcare institution. If your doctor prescribes the Resmed AirSense 10 AutoSet model for you, and you meet the subsidy criteria, you are eligible for a one-time subsidy and the cost of the PAP device will be subsidised by 30% to 70%.

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