

# Medical Coverage Policy



**Blue Cross  
Blue Shield**  
of Rhode Island

## Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) Rehabilitation

Device/Equipment    Drug    Medical    Surgery    Test    Other

<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>4/1/2001</b>	<b>Policy Last Updated:</b>	<b>04/05/2011</b>
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**Prospective review is recommended/required. Please check the member agreement for preauthorization guidelines.**

**Prospective review is not required.**

### Description:

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) Rehabilitative exercise consists of a series of sessions, each session lasting 45-60 minutes. A motorized treadmill or a track is used to permit each patient to achieve symptom-limited claudication. Sessions are supervised by an exercise physiologist or nurse. The supervising provider monitors the individual patient's claudication threshold and other cardiovascular limitations for adjustment of workload. During the supervised rehabilitative program, the development of new arrhythmias, symptoms that might suggest angina, or the continued inability of the patient to progress to an adequate level of exercise, may require physician review and examination of the patient.

### Medical Criteria:

Not applicable

### Policy:

#### BlueCHiP for Medicare Members:

Unless these services are listed by our plan as a covered service, services are considered **not reasonable and necessary** according to the standards of Original Medicare.

#### All other BCBSRI products:

Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) Rehabilitative exercise is considered **not medically necessary** as there is insufficient peer reviewed, scientifically controlled studies in the literature which demonstrate the superior outcomes of such programs over exercise without supervision.

### Coverage:

Benefits may vary between groups/contracts. Please refer to the appropriate evidence of coverage, subscriber agreement, or benefit booklet for not medically necessary services.

### Coding:

**93668**

### Also known as:

PVD Rehabilitation  
Vascular Exercise Program

### Published:

*Policy Update, April 2001*  
*Policy Update, June 2007*  
*Policy Update, May 2008*  
*Provider Update, July 2009*

Provider Update, June 2010  
Provider Update, June 2011

**References:**

Ciaccia JM. Benefits of a structured peripheral arterial vascular rehabilitation program. *Journal of Vascular Nursing*;1993;11(1):1-4.

Gardner AW, Poehlman ET. Exercise Rehabilitation Programs for the Treatment of Claudication Pain. *JAMA*;1995;(274)12:975-980.

*Journal of Vascular Nursing*. 1993 Mar;11(1):1-4. Links. Benefits of a structured peripheral arterial vascular rehabilitation program.

McDermott MM, Liu K, Ferrucci L, Criqui MH et al. *Physical Performance in Peripheral Arterial Disease: A Slower Rate of Decline in Patients Who Walk More*. *Annals of Internal Medicine*; 2006(January);144:10-20.

McDermott MM, Ades P, Guralnik JM, et al. Treadmill Exercise and Resistance Training in Patients with Peripheral Arterial Disease with and Without Intermittent Claudication: A Randomized Controlled Trial. *JAMA*;2009;301(2):165-174.

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