Policy Statement

Home cardiorespiratory monitoring may be considered **medically necessary** when initiated in infants younger than 12 months of age (see Policy Guidelines for further discussion of age limits) when any of the following criteria are met:

- Those who have experienced a brief resolved unexplained event (previously known as *apparent life-threatening event*) and are not considered lower risk following clinical evaluation
- Those with tracheostomies or anatomic abnormalities that make them vulnerable to airway compromise
- Those with neurologic or metabolic disorders affecting respiratory control, including central apnea and apnea of prematurity
- Those with chronic lung disease (i.e., bronchopulmonary dysplasia; see Policy Guidelines)

Home cardiorespiratory monitoring is considered **not medically necessary** in infants with any siblings with a history of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), but without at least one of the indications cited.

Home cardiorespiratory monitoring in all other conditions, including but not limited to the diagnosis of obstructive sleep apnea, is considered **investigational**.

Policy Guidelines

This policy does not address the use of an unattended (unsupervised) home sleep study for the diagnosis and management of obstructive sleep apnea. If obstructive sleep apnea is a consideration, refer to Blue Shield of California Medical Policy: Diagnosis and Medical Management of Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome.

This policy applies only to the use of U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)—approved home monitoring systems. A variety of commercially available baby monitoring devices are marketed to parents for monitoring infants’ sleep, breathing, and behavior. Although some of the devices include pulse oximetry, they are not sold as medical devices and are therefore not cleared for marketing by FDA.

2016 Clinical Practice Guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics (Tieder et al, 2016) defined brief resolved unexplained event (BRUE; formerly *apparent life threatening event* [ALTE]) as: “An event occurring in an infant younger than 1 year when the observer reports a sudden, brief, and now resolved episode of greater than or equal to one of the following:

- Cyanosis or pallor
- Absent, decreased, or irregular breathing
- Marked change in tone (hyper- or hypotonia)
- Altered level of responsiveness

The diagnosis of bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD) is dependent on gestational age, and is outlined in table PG1 based on the 2001 consensus definition from the US National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (Jobe et al, 2001).
Table PG1: Diagnosis of Bronchopulmonary Dysplasia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>Gestational Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 32 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time point of assessment</strong></td>
<td>36 weeks PMA or discharge to home, whichever comes first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36 weeks PMA or discharge to home, whichever comes first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mild BPD</strong></td>
<td>Breathing room air at 36 weeks PMA or discharge, whichever comes first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate BPD</strong></td>
<td>Need for less than 30% oxygen at 36 weeks PMA or discharge, whichever comes first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Severe BPD</strong></td>
<td>Need for greater than or equal to 30% oxygen and/or positive pressure at 36 weeks PMA or discharge, whichever comes first</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BPD: bronchopulmonary dysplasia; PMA: postmenstrual age.

As suggested by a Policy Statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (see Rationale section), the physician should establish a review of the problem, a plan of care, and a specific plan for periodic review and termination. Clear documentation of the reasons for continuing monitoring is necessary should monitoring beyond 43 weeks’ of postmenstrual age be recommended. Home cardiorespiratory monitoring for apnea is generally not considered appropriate for pediatric patients older than 1 year of age. There may be a subset of young children who require cardiorespiratory monitoring beyond 1 year of age, such as certain patients with home noninvasive or invasive ventilator use or chronic lung disease.

Home monitors should be equipped with an event recorder.

Coding
The following CPT codes may be used:

- **94772**: Circadian respiratory pattern recording (pediatric pneumogram), 12-24 hour continuous recording, infant
- **94774**: Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time; includes monitor attachment, download of data, review, interpretation, and preparation of a report by a physician or other qualified health care professional
- **94775**: Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time; monitor attachment only (includes hook-up, initiation of recording and disconnection)
- **94776**: Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time; monitoring, download of information, receipt of transmission(s) and analyses by computer only
1.01.06  Home Cardiorespiratory Monitoring

- **94777**: Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time; review, interpretation and preparation of report only by a physician or other qualified health care professional

**Notes:**
- Home cardiorespiratory monitoring is intended, in part, to alert caregivers of the need for intervention at the time of an event in patients with apnea, and is not appropriate for diagnosis of sleep-disordered breathing (central or obstructive).
- Coverage for services such as physician visits and diagnostic testing in conjunction with sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) monitoring should be provided in accordance with individual contracts.
- Coverage is usually not provided for:
  - A backup electrical system

Parental training sessions, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or instructions in the use of the monitor when identified as a separate charge. These charges are usually included in the rental or purchase fee.

**Description**

Home cardiorespiratory monitors track respiratory effort and heart rate to detect episodes of apnea. They have been used for a variety of indications that may be associated with increased risk of respiratory compromise.

**Related Policies**

- Diagnosis and Medical Management of Obstructive Sleep Apnea Syndrome

**Benefit Application**

Benefit determinations should be based in all cases on the applicable contract language. To the extent there are any conflicts between these guidelines and the contract language, the contract language will control. Please refer to the member’s contract benefits in effect at the time of service to determine coverage or non-coverage of these services as it applies to an individual member.

Some state or federal mandates [e.g., Federal Employee Program (FEP)] prohibits plans from denying Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved technologies as investigational. In these instances, plans may have to consider the coverage eligibility of FDA-approved technologies on the basis of medical necessity alone.

**Regulatory Status**

A number of infant apnea/cardiorespiratory monitors have been cleared for marketing by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) through the 510(k) process. This includes the SmartMonitor 2 Apnea Monitor (Philip Children’s Medical Ventures, Respironics), which is intended for continuous monitoring of respiration, heart rate, and pulse oximetry of infant patients in a hospital or home environment. FDA product code: NPF and DQA.

**Rationale**

**Background**

**Home Cardiorespiratory Monitoring for Apnea Monitoring**

Home cardiorespiratory monitors track respiratory effort and heart rate, and have been used to monitor central apnea of prematurity in newly discharged at-risk or high-risk premature infants.
infants are at increased risk of cardiorespiratory events until 43 weeks of postconceptual age) and in other infants at risk of apnea. An alarm will sound if there is respiratory cessation (central apnea) beyond a predetermined time limit (e.g., 20 seconds) or if the heart rate falls below a preset rate (bradycardia) to notify the parent that intervention (stimulation, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, cardiac compressions) is required. Unless an oximeter is added to the 2-channel devices, home apnea monitors are not effective for detecting obstructive sleep apneas. False alarms due to movement artifact are common with pulse oximeters, and these devices are not intended for the diagnosis of sleep-disordered breathing in a child.

**Home Monitoring for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Prevention**

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) refers to the sudden death of an infant younger than 1 year of age; the circumstances are unexplained after a thorough investigation that includes autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the family history. As a means to decrease the incidence of SIDS, in the 1970s, cardiorespiratory monitoring was suggested. However, clinical studies have failed to establish that the use of home monitoring reduces the incidence of SIDS. In 2011, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) reiterated its recommendations that home monitoring should not be used as a strategy to prevent SIDS. Instead, AAP recommended that proven practices should be promoted to reduce the incidence of SIDS, which include supine sleeping, use of a firm bed surface, routine immunizations, breast-feeding, and avoidance of exposure to tobacco smoke, alcohol, and illegal drugs. One of these proven practices (supine sleeping) has been promoted in the “Safe to Sleep” campaign (formerly called the “Back to Sleep” campaign) initiated in 1994 by AAP, as well as by the National Institute of Child Health and Development and the Maternal Child Health Bureau of Human Resources and Services Administration. The campaign is a national effort to educate health care professionals, parents, and caregivers about the significance of placing infants in the supine sleeping position to reduce SIDS. The incidence of SIDS in the United States decreased dramatically between 1992 and 2001, especially in the years after the first supine sleep position recommendations were issued.

**Other Home Monitoring Indications**

Home cardiorespiratory monitors are used for reasons other than preventing SIDS. They include monitoring infants at high risk of respiratory compromise due to chronic ventilator or oxygen requirements, tracheostomies or anatomic abnormalities that make them vulnerable to airway compromise, and central apnea, including apnea, bradycardia, and oxygen desaturations associated with prematurity. Former premature infants with bronchopulmonary dysplasia (i.e., neonatal chronic lung disease), which may lead to chronic oxygen requirement, may have indications for home cardiorespiratory monitoring.

An additional potential use of home cardiorespiratory monitors is monitoring infants who have had acute events associated with apnea, color change, or loss of tone. Originally, these events were referred to as apparent life-threatening events (ALTEs). ALTE was defined by a 1986 National Institutes of Health Conference as “an episode that is frightening to the observer and that is characterized by some combination of apnea (central or occasionally obstructive), color change (usually cyanotic or pallid but occasionally erythematous or plethoric), marked change in muscle tone (usually marked limpness), choking, or gagging. In some cases, the observer fears that the infant has died.” In 2016, AAP issued updated clinical practice guideline, which proposed a replacement of the term ALTE with the term brief resolved unexplained event (BRUE), which is defined as follows:

- An event occurring in an infant younger than 1 year when the observer reports a sudden, brief, and now resolved episode of greater than or equal to one of the following:
  - Cyanosis or pallor
  - Absent, decreased, or irregular breathing
  - Marked change in tone (hyper- or hypotonia)
  - Altered level of responsiveness. A BRUE is diagnosed only when there is no explanation for a qualifying event after conducting an appropriate history and physical examination.
Literature Review

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome
During the 1970s and 1980s, it was hypothesized that prolonged periods of apnea and bradycardia were markers for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) risk in the susceptible infant and preceded the ultimate SIDS event; if this was the case, home apnea monitors could alert caregivers to the presence of an impending event. A 2011 technical report from AAP did not recommend home apnea monitoring to prevent SIDS. The AAP report cited a lack of evidence that home monitors are effective for this purpose.

The Collaborative Home Infant Monitoring Evaluation (CHIME) study, a longitudinal cohort study conducted from 1994 to 1998, was designed to address whether severe episodes of apnea and bradycardia occur more commonly in infants considered at higher risk for SIDS. The study included 1079 infants, both healthy and considered at high risk for SIDS based on a history of an apparent life-threatening event (ALTE), siblings with SIDS, and preterm gestation, who were observed with home cardiorespiratory monitoring for the first 6 months after birth. Monitor alarms were set off frequently across all risk groups, occurring in 41% of all subjects. So-called “extreme” events occurred in all groups, but preterm infants were at higher risk until 43 weeks postconceptual age. The authors concluded that episodes of prolonged apnea or bradycardia primarily occurred before the developmental age when most SIDS deaths occurred. Follow-up analyses of the CHIME study in 2008 found that extreme events were not significantly associated with any known SIDS risk factors.

In 2012, Strehle et al published a systematic review of literature on the impact of home monitoring (apnea monitoring, respiratory monitoring, or cardiorespiratory monitoring) on mortality in infants at increased risk of SIDS. Reviewers identified 1 pilot study that assessed the feasibility of a randomized controlled trial to evaluate home monitoring and 10 unique case series. Reviewers concluded that there was a lack of high-level evidence that home monitoring would be beneficial in preventing SIDS.

Other Respiratory Conditions
There is a lack of evidence on use of home cardiorespiratory monitors in other conditions. For many of these conditions, trials would be difficult to perform due to small numbers of patients and logistic difficulties for these conditions that would make trial enrollment difficult. As a result, the best available recommendations for treatment currently rely on expert consensus.

A consensus document published in 2003 by AAP addressed the use of home apnea monitors for other respiratory conditions. The AAP policy statement identified infants who could benefit from home monitoring, not because of an increased risk of SIDS but because of other factors that increase the risk of sudden death. These infants include those who have:
- Experienced an ALTE
- Tracheostomies or anatomic abnormalities that make them vulnerable to airway compromise
- Neurologic or metabolic disorders affecting respiratory control
- Chronic lung disease (i.e., bronchopulmonary dysplasia), particularly those requiring supplemental oxygen; continuous positive airway pressure; or mechanical ventilation

The 2003 AAP consensus statement was retired in 2012. A review of the literature since 2012 did not identify major studies addressing outcomes with home apnea monitoring that would significantly call into question the 2003 policy statement’s criteria for home cardiorespiratory monitoring.

Children who present with ALTEs represent a heterogeneous group in terms of the event severity and underlying pathology. Systematic reviews have found wide variation in resource utilization for evaluating patients after an ALTE and in the eventual diagnosis given after an ALTE. A 2013 systematic review of 37 studies of ALTE suggested that rates of recurrent events were higher
in patients with a history of recurrent ALTE, prematurity, or suspected child maltreatment. One 2013 observational cohort study reported 4-week follow-up outcomes for 300 infants seen in an emergency department with a diagnosis of ALTE. Of the 228 patients admitted, 110 (48.2%) had in-hospital pneumography (101 with esophageal pH monitoring, 9 without esophageal pH monitoring). Of those with pneumography, 33 patients had apnea, with or without evidence of gastroesophageal reflux. There was no significant association between positive findings on pneumography and recurrent ALTE in the 4 weeks after hospitalization. Limitations of this study include nonstandardized evaluation of patients with ALTE and whether results of an in-hospital pneumography study translate to the home setting.

In 2016, AAP published a consensus statement on the evaluation of low-risk infants with ALTEs, which the consensus statement authors proposed renaming “brief resolved unexplained events” (BRUE). This consensus statement was based on an update of the 2013 systematic review on ALTEs. Eighteen additional studies were identified in the updated systematic review. The updated guidelines defined patients at lower risk of recurrent events after a BRUE, and recommended against the initiation of home cardiorespiratory monitoring in this group (evidence quality: B; strength of recommendation: moderate). This recommendation is based on studies reporting on the occurrence of respiratory pauses and bradycardia in normal infants, studies showing no improvements in outcomes or SIDS prevention with home apnea monitors, and lack of correlation between ALTEs and SIDS. The guidelines and updated systematic review did not address the use of home monitoring in high-risk infants with unexplained events.

Home apnea monitors are sometimes used in neonates with apnea, bradycardia, and oxygen desaturation events. Apnea of prematurity is extremely common in preterm infants, but may also occur in late preterm infants. In many cases, infants with these events are observed in the hospital until a “safe” period of time without an event occurs, but some infants are discharged to home with a home monitor. For example, a 2016 three-center, 5-year case series reporting on the evaluation and management of apnea, bradycardia, and oxygen desaturation events in infants born at 34 or more weeks of gestational age reported that 4.5% of infants were discharged to home with a monitor.

Summary of Evidence
For individuals who have risk of respiratory failure in infancy who receive home cardiorespiratory monitoring, the evidence includes primarily observational studies. Relevant outcomes are overall survival and morbid events. For prevention of sudden infant death syndrome, the available published literature, primarily from the CHIME study, does not support the use of monitoring. For other respiratory conditions, there is also a lack of published evidence; however, national guidelines published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) have identified specific groups of infants who might benefit from home monitoring because of other factors that increase the risk of sudden death (e.g., tracheostomies, chronic lung disease). These conditions identified by AAP as benefiting from home cardiorespiratory monitoring may therefore be considered medically necessary.

Supplemental Information
Practice Guidelines and Position Statements
In 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued clinical practice guidelines on brief resolved unexplained events (BRUE), formerly apparent life-threatening events (ALTEs), which addressed the use of home apnea monitoring for low-risk infants. BRUE is defined as follows:
An event occurring in an infant younger than 1 year when the observer reports a sudden, brief, and now resolved episode of greater than or equal to 1 of the following: (1) cyanosis or pallor; (2) absent, decreased, or irregular breathing; (3) marked change in tone (hyper- or hypotonia); and (4) altered level of responsiveness. A BRUE is diagnosed only when there is no explanation for a qualifying event after conducting an appropriate history and physical examination.
These guidelines outline criteria for risk stratification for recurrent events. Low-risk patients are defined as follows, along with having no concerns identified on history or physical exam:

- Age greater than 60 days
- Born greater than or equal to 32 weeks gestation and corrected gestational age greater than or equal to 45 weeks
- No CPR [cardiopulmonary resuscitation] by trained medical provider
- Event lasted less than 1 minute
- First event

For low-risk patients, the guidelines state that management should not include initiation of home cardiorespiratory monitoring.

In 2016, AAP published a clinical report on apnea of prematurity. This report makes the following statement about home monitoring for infants with apnea of prematurity:

Routine home monitoring for preterm infants with resolved apnea of prematurity is not recommended. Cardiorespiratory monitoring after hospital discharge may be prescribed for some preterm infants with an unusually prolonged course of recurrent, extreme apnea. Current evidence suggests that if such monitoring is elected, it can be discontinued in most infants after 43 weeks’ PMA [postmenstrual age] unless indicated by other significant medical conditions.

AAP published a policy on home apnea monitoring in 2003 reaffirmed in 2007. In 2012, the policy was retired. The document noted that infants who may benefit from home monitoring include those who have experienced an ALTE, have tracheostomies, have anatomic abnormalities that make them vulnerable to airway compromise, or have neurologic or metabolic disorders affecting respiratory control, including central sleep apnea, chronic lung disease including bronchopulmonary dysplasia, and especially those individuals requiring supplemental oxygen, continuous positive airway pressure or mechanical ventilation. Furthermore, AAP recommended that “if monitoring is to be used at home, parents and other caregivers must be trained in observation techniques, operation of the monitor, and infant cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Medical and technical support staff should always be available for direct or telephone consultation.

AAP also published a policy on the hospital discharge of high-risk neonates in 2008 that addressed the role of home apnea monitors for preterm and otherwise high-risk infants. The guideline states:

Home monitors are rarely indicated for detection of apnea solely because of immature respiratory control, in part because infants with immature respiratory control, in general, are still hospitalized until they are no longer at risk of apnea of prematurity. Use of a home monitor does not preclude the need for demonstrated maturity of respiratory control before discharge and should not be used to justify discharge of infants who are still at risk of apnea. Home monitors are not indicated for prevention of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in preterm infants, although preterm infants are at increased risk of SIDS.

U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendations
Not applicable.

Medicare National Coverage
There is no national coverage determination (NCD). In the absence of an NCD, coverage decisions are left to the discretion of local Medicare carriers.

Ongoing and Unpublished Clinical Trials
A search of ClinicalTrials.gov in June 2016 did not identify any ongoing or unpublished trials that would likely influence this review.
References


Documentation for Clinical Review

Please provide the following documentation (if/when requested):

- History and physical and/or consultation notes including:
  - Discharge summary or progress notes including a plan of care, and specific plan for periodic review and termination of the apnea monitor
- Prescription for home apnea monitor

Post Service

- Results/reports of tests performed
Coding

This Policy relates only to the services or supplies described herein. Benefits may vary according to benefit design; therefore, contract language should be reviewed before applying the terms of the Policy. Inclusion or exclusion of a procedure, diagnosis or device code(s) does not constitute or imply member coverage or provider reimbursement.

MN/IE

The following services may be considered medically necessary in certain instances and investigational in others. Services may be considered medically necessary when policy criteria are met. Services may be considered investigational when the policy criteria are not met or when the code describes application of a product in the position statement that is investigational.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPT®</td>
<td>94772</td>
<td>Circadian respiratory pattern recording (pediatric pneumogram), 12-24 hour continuous recording, infant</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPT®</td>
<td>94774</td>
<td>Pediatric home apnea monitoring event recording including respiratory rate, pattern and heart rate per 30-day period of time; includes monitor attachment, download of data, review, interpretation, and preparation of a report by a physician or other qualified health care professional</td>
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<td>CPT®</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A4556</td>
<td>Electrodes (e.g., apnea monitor), per pair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A4557</td>
<td>Lead wires (e.g., apnea monitor), per pair</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E0618</td>
<td>Apnea monitor, without recording feature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E0619</td>
<td>Apnea monitor, with recording feature</td>
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| ICD-10 Procedure | None |
| ICD-10 Diagnosis | All Diagnoses |

Policy History

This section provides a chronological history of the activities, updates and changes that have occurred with this Medical Policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Reason</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/15/2007</td>
<td>BCBSA Medical Policy adoption</td>
<td>Medical Policy Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/22/2013</td>
<td>Coding Update</td>
<td>Administrative Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>06/30/2015</td>
<td>Coding Update</td>
<td>Medical Policy Committee</td>
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</table>
**Definitions of Decision Determinations**

**Medically Necessary:** A treatment, procedure, or drug is medically necessary only when it has been established as safe and effective for the particular symptoms or diagnosis, is not investigational or experimental, is not being provided primarily for the convenience of the patient or the provider, and is provided at the most appropriate level to treat the condition.

**Investigational/Experimental:** A treatment, procedure, or drug is investigational when it has not been recognized as safe and effective for use in treating the particular condition in accordance with generally accepted professional medical standards. This includes services where approval by the federal or state governmental is required prior to use, but has not yet been granted.

**Split Evaluation:** Blue Shield of California/Blue Shield of California Life & Health Insurance Company (Blue Shield) policy review can result in a split evaluation, where a treatment, procedure, or drug will be considered to be investigational for certain indications or conditions, but will be deemed safe and effective for other indications or conditions, and therefore potentially medically necessary in those instances.

**Prior Authorization Requirements (as applicable to your plan)**

Within five days before the actual date of service, the provider must confirm with Blue Shield that the member’s health plan coverage is still in effect. Blue Shield reserves the right to revoke an authorization prior to services being rendered based on cancellation of the member’s eligibility. Final determination of benefits will be made after review of the claim for limitations or exclusions.

Questions regarding the applicability of this policy should be directed to the Prior Authorization Department. Please call (800) 541-6652 or visit the provider portal at www.blueshieldca.com/provider.

Disclaimer: This medical policy is a guide in evaluating the medical necessity of a particular service or treatment. Blue Shield of California may consider published peer-reviewed scientific literature, national guidelines, and local standards of practice in developing its medical policy. Federal and state law, as well as contract language, including definitions and specific contract provisions/exclusions, take precedence over medical policy and must be considered first in determining covered services. Member contracts may differ in their benefits. Blue Shield reserves the right to review and update policies as appropriate.