

# SPECIAL eBULLETIN

FOR PROFESSIONAL AND FACILITY PROVIDERS

AUG. 17, 2018

## FREESPIRA OFFERS PATIENTS DRUG-FREE, LONG LASTING SYMPTOM RELIEF FROM PANIC ATTACKS

### APPLICABLE TO COMMERCIAL MEMBERS ONLY

Freesspira<sup>®</sup>, a participant in the [VITAL](#) Innovation Program, is delivering positive results by reducing or eliminating symptoms for members suffering from panic attacks and associated anxiety disorders. Freesspira achieves these results by correcting the underlying physiological component of panic, which includes chronic hyperventilation and/or other dysfunctional respiratory patterns.

Freesspira is an FDA-cleared interactive, drug-free treatment that trains patients to stabilize breathing rates and exhaled carbon dioxide levels, using a custom sensor. Audio and visual cues guide the patient as they learn the breathing technique, and real-time progress is displayed on a handheld tablet. The treatment includes twice daily 17-minute sessions done at home. After only one month, the treatment is complete.

Records of all breathing sessions are available for review via a secure Freesspira website, and weekly reports are sent to the authorizing clinician.

### PATIENT SYMPTOMS

Research shows people suffering from panic attacks associated with anxiety disorders breathe differently, which can trigger a range of physiological symptoms including:

- Chest pain
- Increased heart rate
- Shortness of breath
- Faintness
- Sweating
- Numbness in the fingers and toes
- Feeling of detachment or fear of dying

Patients with generalized anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic disorder, or social anxiety often misinterpret these physical sensations as a serious medical event. They fear a heart attack or stroke, leading to over-utilization of medical services including emergency department visits, diagnostic testing, medication use, and primary and behavioral health provider visits.



## ABOUT FREESPIRA

Freespira is an independent company working with Highmark to improve care for members with panic disorder and panic attacks, helping them live a better quality of life.

Results for patients who have completed the Freespira treatment include:

- 85% were panic attack free at the end of the one-month treatment
- 79% were panic attack free at one-year post treatment
- 64% reduction in emergency department costs

To determine if Freespira is an option for your patients suffering from panic attacks and associated disorders visit [freespira.com](https://www.freespira.com) or call Freespira at 1-800-385-1892.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Freespira is not to be used *during* a panic attack. It is a one-month treatment used to correct panic symptoms long term.
- Freespira is a covered benefit for non-Medicare Highmark adult members (deductibles and co-pay or co-insurance apply).
- You are not responsible for submitting a claim for Freespira. You bill only for a standard office visit.
- Patients can use Freespira while on medications and/or in psychotherapy.
- As a licensed clinician (MD, PhD, LSW), you authorize the use of Freespira.