

# Understanding **DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT**

The Durable Medical Equipment (DME) industry, also known as the home medical equipment (HME) industry, plays a crucial role by supporting individuals with various medical conditions in managing their health at home. DME encompasses a wide range of devices and supplies designed to assist people with a variety of health needs and is utilized by a diverse population spanning all ages and backgrounds. Increasingly, health care is being managed outside of institutional care settings, driving utilization of home-based care.

DME enables individuals to receive necessary medical support in the comfort of their homes, promoting independence, improving quality of life, and reducing the need for frequent hospital visits. It allows people to manage their health conditions effectively while staying connected to their families and communities.



## **DME INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS**

The DME industry is comprised of professionals who make or provide the equipment, supplies, and services to end users (patients) who benefit from this equipment. DME suppliers work with the prescribing health care provider and end user to properly manage the individual's needs by matching the person with the appropriate product(s) and providing essential service and support in a cost-effective homecare setting.

The DME industry plays a critical role in supporting individuals with various medical conditions in managing their health at home, allowing them to lead more independent and fulfilling lives.

## VARIETY OF PEOPLE USE DME

From infants to centenarians, DME can help with every stage of life. Whether one is recovering from an acute injury, has chronic conditions, is breastfeeding and pumping for their newborn, or planning end-of-life care, DME plays a vital role in helping individuals manage their medical needs.



Many Americans have these common conditions which may require DME:

Arthritis <i>53.2 million</i>	Chronic Kidney Disease <i>37 million</i>	Diabetes <i>38.4 million</i>	Muscular Dystrophy (MD) <i>250,000</i>	Ulcerative Colitis <i>1.3 million</i>
Asthma <i>27 million</i>	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) <i>37 million</i>	Fractures & Orthopedic Injuries <i>6.8 million/yr</i>	Multiple Sclerosis (MS) <i>1 million</i>	Spina Bifida <i>166,000</i>
Cancer <i>1.9 million/yr</i>	Cerebral Palsy <i>1 million</i>	Lymphedema <i>10 million</i>	Parkinson's Disease <i>500,000</i>	Spinal Cord Injury <i>302,000</i>
Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) <i>6.2 million</i>	Crohn's Disease <i>1 million</i>	Malnutrition Requiring Tube Feeding <i>400,000</i>	Permanent Traumatic Brain Injuries <i>5.3 million</i>	Stroke <i>795,000</i>

## TYPES OF DME

DME plays a critical role in supporting the body's different functions. Some types of DME are more visible to the public, such as wheelchairs and home oxygen therapy, but the DME benefit helps a variety of people who may not have visible medical needs.



### RESPIRATORY

Devices like **oxygen therapy**, **ventilators**, **nebulizers**, and **CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure)** machines help individuals with conditions such as COPD, asthma, chronic respiratory failure, and sleep apnea breathe more easily and improve their quality of life.



### MOBILITY

**Wheelchairs**, **walkers**, and **power scooters** provide crucial support for individuals with mobility impairments, enabling them to maintain independence and participate in daily activities.

For those requiring specialized, custom-built wheelchairs to meet their medical, anatomical, and functional needs, **Complex Rehab Technology (CRT)** accommodates those with complex seating and positioning needs. This is particularly helpful for people with conditions such as spinal cord injuries and neurological disorders.



### BLADDER & BOWEL MANAGEMENT

People with urinary retention, incontinence, and issues eliminating waste benefit from disposable medical supplies like **catheters**, **ostomy products**, and **incontinence products** such as diapers and pads. While a variety of medical conditions may require these products, common conditions included urinary incontinence, cancer, neurological diseases, trauma or spinal cord injury, and GI disorders.



## WOUND HEALING

From **woundcare supplies** to **negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT)** devices, DME can help the body with wound management and healing while reducing the risk of infection. People with ulcers, surgical wounds, and trauma wounds require these types of products.



## NUTRITION

Receiving proper nutrition is essential to life. **Breast pumps** aid lactating mothers in expressing milk, while **enteral nutrition** delivers necessary nutrition and hydration through the GI tract and/or oral nutrition supplements, benefiting individuals with malnutrition and dysphagia.



## POSITIONING

A variety of DME is available to help folks who may need assistance with their positioning, including **hospital beds** and **specialty mattresses** to adjust for alignment, circulation, and reduced pressures, **patient lifts** to transfer from one surface to another, and **seat lift chairs** to help stand from a seated position.



## BLOOD GLUCOSE

**Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM)** devices help individuals with diabetes monitor their blood glucose levels continuously, providing real-time data and alerts for glucose control.



## VEINS

**Compression garments** improve circulation and reduce swelling for individuals with circulatory issues such as lymphedema and venous insufficiency.



## ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING

DME also includes products that can help people with their activities of daily living, from **bathroom safety products** like grab bars, raised toilet seats, and shower benches that help prevent falls and provide stability in the bathroom. DME also includes products to help with grooming, dressing, and eating.