

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Question: Body Mass Index

Question: Is there a CPT code for a Body Mass Index?

Answer: There is no specific code in the CPT for calculating body mass index, notes Fitzgerald. However, you might be able to use 99199 (unlisted special service or report). Most insurance companies would want you to provide more information though before they paid you on this code. Thus, if you decide to bill 99199, be proactive and send a note describing the service.

Is the body mass index taken in conjunction with an office or hospital visit? If the insurance company wont allow any of the unlisted procedure codes, certainly the service could be billed as part of an evaluation and management (E/M) code. Depending on the patient, taking a body mass index may require considerably more effort in obtaining a comprehensive history and doing a multi-system exam, as well as require complex decision-making. Thus, a higher level of E/M code may be appropriate. Since taking a body mass index is not a common evaluation service, consider adding the modifier -22 (unusual procedural services) to the E/M code also.