

Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

Reader Questions: Don't Confuse PAM With VEP

Question: Is 95930 the correct procedure code for potential visual acuity meter? Can this code be billed with a comprehensive exam code?

Ohio Subscriber

Answer: There is no CPT code for the potential acuity meter (PAM) test, also known as the Guyton-Minkowski Potential Acuity Meter. Medicare carriers consider PAM to be an integral part of the evaluation and management service; therefore, they will not reimburse PAM separately from an eye exam or E/M visit.

Optometrists often use PAM to estimate potential vision prior to cataract surgery.

The basics: The PAM projects an eye chart directly onto the retina, bypassing the cloudy lens, giving the optometrist a way to see how much the patient's vision may improve after surgery.

Code 95930 (Visual evoked potential [VEP] testing central nervous system, checkerboard or flash) describes a neurological test in which electrodes measure the electrical activity in the visual pathways of the patient's brain. The VEP can evaluate conditions like optic neuritis, optic tumors and multiple sclerosis.

Note: For more information on coding VEP tests, see "VEP Tests on Nonverbal Patients? Look to 95930 " in Optometry Coding & Billing Alert, Vol. 6, No. 9, page 68.