

## **Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert**

### **Get to Know the VQ Scan Specifics**

A lung ventilation/perfusion scan, or VQ scan, is a test that helps a pulmonologist measure the airflow (ventilation) and blood flow (perfusion) in the lungs by tracing a small amount of low-risk radioactive substance. The tracer is introduced through inhalation of a radioisotope gas in the ventilation scan, while it is injected into a vein in the patient's arm in the perfusion scan. Images are obtained using a specialized camera that will detect the distribution of the radioactive energy in the body.

A physician will most commonly order a VQ scan to help rule out or confirm pulmonary embolism (PE), a condition where a lung artery is suddenly blocked due to a blood clot. The physician may also use these tests to detect the quality of blood flow in the lungs' blood vessels, and sometimes as a prep for some types of lung surgery. The physician may perform these tests separately or together.