

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### Terminology Check: Here's How Sleep Studies and Polysomnography Relate to Each Other

**Hint: Eliminating one points you to the other.**

Sleep studies are tests that watch what happens to a patient's body during sleep, and try to find out what causes sleep problems. Sleep studies usually are done in a hospital's sleep lab or with portable equipment the patient uses at home.

The most common type of sleep study is polysomnography. A basic electroencephalography (EEG) can be done in an awake or asleep state, and monitors brainwaves. Physicians can use the test to monitor the different characteristic patterns in an awake or asleep state as well as any activity caused by stimulation such as a strobe light or hyperventilation. The EEG works in conjunction with a sleep study or polysomnography to define the different sleep stages and monitor brain activity in those stages.

"For a study to be reported as polysomnography (PSG), sleep must be recorded and staged and directly attended by a qualified technologist," states a Local Coverage Determination (LCD) from First Coast.

In contrast, a sleep study can be performed either attended or unattended. And monitoring requirements are decreased for sleep study in comparison to polysomnography, which requires a minimum of a 3-lead EEG, submental EMG, and left and right EOG, as well as one additional parameter.