

Eli's Rehab Report

Reader Questions: Watch The Clock When Performing Simultaneous Services

Question: Our PT recently performed an ultrasound in combination with electrical stimulation via the ultrasound head. Would this be considered manual stimulation? How would we bill for the two modalities?

Answer: Yes, if you provided the electrical stimulation through the ultrasound head, then it's considered manual electrical stimulation.

Billing is a bit trickier. Neither ultrasound nor electrical stimulation should last longer than 15 minutes. The duration doesn't change because you perform the services together. Look at the treatment notes to determine whether the ultrasound or the manual electrical stimulation took up a substantial amount of the 15 minutes. Then bill for a single service -- either ultrasound or manual electrical stimulation.

Best: Check your payer's guidelines before you submit your claim. Some payers, such as National Government Services, may dictate which service you can bill for when the services are provided simultaneously.

Reader Questions were answered by **Rick Gawenda, PT**, director of finance for Kinetix Advanced Physical Therapy, Inc. in Valencia, Calif., and president/CEO of Gawenda Seminars & Consulting.