

Eli's Rehab Report

You Be the Coder: SPECT Imaging

Test your coding knowledge. Determine how you would code this situation before looking at the box below for the answer.

Question: Our physiatrist used a radiology method called SPECT instead of MRI to diagnose spinal osteomyelitis. Is there a code for SPECT?

Oklahoma Subscriber

Answer: SPECT (single photon emission computed tomography) is a type of three-dimensional bone imaging often used to scan the bones of patients who either cannot have an MRI (due to pacemakers, claustrophobia or other conditions) or to confirm diagnoses found on alternative forms of scan. The code for bone SPECT scans is [CPT 78320](#) (bone and/or joint imaging; tomographic [SPECT]); because this code is not site-specific, it should be used for your physician's spinal scans to test for osteomyelitis (730.0-730.2). Although E/M visits were previously bundled into the SPECT code, these edits were deleted and the codes can now be billed separately without any modifiers.