



Screening Pap Tests & Pelvic Exams



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What's Changed?

Note: No substantive content updates.

Important female preventive health care includes screening Pap tests and pelvic exams:

- A [screening Pap test](#) (called a Pap smear) is a lab test used to detect early cervical cancer. A health care provider collects a cervical cell sample and interprets the test results.
- A [screening pelvic exam](#) helps detect precancers, genital cancers, infections, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), reproductive system abnormalities, and other genital and vaginal problems.
- A [Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\) screening](#) is also a preventive service. The test detects the virus that causes cervical cancer or warts.

Note: Sections 210.2 and 210.2.1 of the [Medicare National Coverage Determinations Manual, Chapter 1, Part 4](#) have more information.

Together we can advance health equity and help eliminate health disparities for all minority and underserved groups. Find resources and more from the [CMS Office of Minority Health](#):

- [Health Equity Technical Assistance Program](#)
- [Disparities Impact Statement](#)

Female Preventive Screenings

We cover Pap smears, pelvic exams, STI screenings, and HPV screenings. They're similar services and separate benefits.

Coverage Information

Medicare Part B covers all female patient screening Pap tests and pelvic exams (including clinical breast exams) when ordered and performed by 1 of these medical professionals authorized under state law:

- Doctor of medicine or osteopathy
- Certified nurse-midwife
- Physician assistant
- Nurse practitioner
- Clinical nurse specialist

Coverage Frequency

Part B generally covers an HPV screening with a Pap test once every 5 years for all female patients ages 30–65. Table 1 describes how often Part B covers screening Pap tests, pelvic exams, and HPV screening.



Table 1. Medicare-Covered Screening Pap Tests, Pelvic Exams, & HPV Screening

| Covered for | How Often | Additional Information |
|---|---|--|
| Pap Test and Pelvic Exam: Any asymptomatic female patient | Pap Test and Pelvic Exam: Every 24 months (at least 23 months after the most recent screening Pap test or pelvic exam) | N/A |
| Pap Test and Pelvic Exam: A female patient who meets any of these criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence (based on their medical history or other findings) that they're at high risk for developing cervical or vaginal cancer and their physician (or authorized practitioner) recommends they have the test more frequently than every 2 years Female of childbearing age* who had a screening Pap test or pelvic exam during any of the previous 3 years indicating the presence of cervical or vaginal cancer or other abnormality | Pap Test and Pelvic Exam: Annually (at least 11 months after the most recent screening Pap test or pelvic exam) | High risk factors for cervical and vaginal cancer are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early onset of sexual activity (under 16 years old) Multiple sexual partners (5 or more in a lifetime) History of STI (including HIV infection) Fewer than 3 negative Pap tests or no Pap tests within the previous 7 years Diethylstilbestrol (DES) — exposed daughters of women who took DES during pregnancy |
| HPV Screening: Any asymptomatic female patient ages 30–65 years when done with a screening Pap test | HPV Screening: Once every 5 years (at least 4 years and 11 months (59 months total) after the most recent HPV screening) | Refer to the Cervical Cancer Screening with HPV Tests service in the Medicare Preventive Services educational tool |

* Premenopausal female of childbearing age and a physician or qualified practitioner determines childbearing age based on medical history or other findings.

Coinsurance or Copayment & Deductible

We waive the Pap test, pelvic exam, and HPV screening coinsurance or copayment and Part B deductible if the service meets all coverage conditions. However, a charge could apply if the patient sees a non-participating provider.

Documentation

Medical records must document all coverage requirements.

Coding & Diagnosis Information

Procedure Codes & Descriptors

You can perform a screening Pap test and pelvic exam during the same patient encounter. You can also perform an HPV screening during the same encounter on any asymptomatic female patient ages 30–65 at the same time you provide a screening Pap test. When this happens, report both HCPCS procedure codes as separate claim line items.

Table 2. Screening Pap & HPV Test HCPCS Codes

| HCPCS Code | Code Descriptor |
|------------|--|
| G0123 | Screening cytopathology, cervical or vaginal (any reporting system), collected in preservative fluid, automated thin layer preparation, screening by cytotechnologist under physician supervision |
| G0143 | Screening cytopathology, cervical or vaginal (any reporting system), collected in preservative fluid, automated thin layer preparation, with manual screening and rescreening by cytotechnologist under physician supervision |
| G0144 | Screening cytopathology, cervical or vaginal (any reporting system), collected in preservative fluid, automated thin layer preparation, with screening by automated system, under physician supervision |
| G0145 | Screening cytopathology, cervical or vaginal (any reporting system), collected in preservative fluid, automated thin layer preparation, with screening by automated system and manual rescreening under physician supervision |
| G0147 | Screening cytopathology smears, cervical or vaginal, performed by automated system under physician supervision |
| G0148 | Screening cytopathology smears, cervical or vaginal, performed by automated system with manual rescreening |
| G0476 | Infectious agent detection by nucleic acid (DNA or RNA); human papillomavirus (HPV), high-risk types (e.g., 16, 18, 31, 33, 35, 39, 45, 51, 52, 56, 58, 59, 68) for cervical cancer screening, must be performed in addition to Pap test |
| P3000 | Screening Papanicolaou smear, cervical or vaginal, up to three smears, by technician under physician supervision |

Table 3. Physician’s Interpretation: Screening Pap Test HCPCS Codes

| HCPCS Code | Code Descriptor |
|------------|---|
| G0124 | Screening cytopathology, cervical or vaginal (any reporting system), collected in preservative fluid, automated thin layer preparation, requiring interpretation by physician |
| G0141 | Screening cytopathology smears, cervical or vaginal, performed by automated system, with manual rescreening, requiring interpretation by physician |
| P3001 | Screening Papanicolaou smear, cervical or vaginal, up to three smears, requiring interpretation by physician |

Table 4. Lab Specimen: Screening Pap Test HCPCS Code

| HCPCS Code | Code Descriptor |
|------------|---|
| Q0091 | Screening Papanicolaou smear; obtaining, preparing and conveyance of cervical or vaginal smear to laboratory Note: You may collect another specimen when a previously collected Pap smear screening specimen sent to the clinical lab proves unsatisfactory and the lab can’t interpret the test results. To bill this re-test, annotate the claim using HCPCS code Q0091 and modifier –76 (repeat procedure or service by same physician or other qualified health care professional). |

Table 5. Screening Pelvic Exam HCPCS Code

| HCPCS Code | Code Descriptor |
|------------|--|
| G0101 | Cervical or vaginal cancer screening; pelvic and clinical breast examination |



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Diagnosis Codes & Descriptors

Report 1 of the Pap test, pelvic exam, and HPV ICD-10-CM screening diagnosis codes listed in Table 6. Use the appropriate code to indicate the patient's low- or high-risk status.

Table 6. Screening Pap Test & Pelvic Exam Diagnosis Codes

| Risk Level | ICD-10-CM Diagnosis Code | Code Descriptor |
|------------|--------------------------|--|
| Low | Z01.411 | Encounter for gynecological examination (general) (routine) with abnormal findings [Use additional code to identify abnormal findings] |
| Low | Z01.419 | Encounter for gynecological examination (general) (routine) without abnormal findings |
| Low | Z11.51 | Encounter for screening for human papillomavirus (HPV) |
| Low | Z12.4 | Encounter for screening for malignant neoplasm of cervix |
| Low | Z12.72 | Encounter for screening for malignant neoplasm of vagina |
| Low | Z12.79 | Encounter for screening for malignant neoplasm of other genitourinary organs |
| Low | Z12.89 | Encounter for screening for malignant neoplasm of other sites |
| High | Z72.51 | High risk heterosexual behavior |
| High | Z72.52 | High risk homosexual behavior |
| High | Z72.53 | High risk bisexual behavior |
| High | Z77.29 | Contact with and (suspected) exposure to other hazardous substances |
| High | Z77.9 | Other contact with and (suspected) exposures hazardous to health |
| High | Z91.89 | Other specified personal risk factors, not elsewhere classified |
| High | Z92.850 | Personal history of Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell therapy |
| High | Z92.858 | Personal history of other cellular therapy |
| High | Z92.86 | Personal history of gene therapy |
| High | Z92.89 | Personal history of other medical treatment |

Billing Requirements

Professional Claims

Report the appropriate HCPCS code and corresponding ICD-10-CM diagnosis code when submitting professional claims. Include [place of service](#) codes on all professional claims to indicate the setting where you provided the service.

Institutional Claims

Report the appropriate HCPCS code, type of bill (TOB), revenue code, and the corresponding ICD-10-CM diagnosis code when submitting institutional claims.

Type of Bills for Institutional Claims

Submit the claim with the appropriate TOB and associated revenue code listed in Table 7.

Table 7. Screening Pap Test & Pelvic Exam Facility Types, TOBs, & Revenue Codes

| Facility Type | TOB | Screening Pap Test Revenue Code | Pelvic Exam Revenue Code |
|--|------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hospital inpatient (Part B) | 12X | 0311 | 0770 |
| Hospital outpatient | 13X | 0311 | 0770 |
| Hospital other Part B (non-patient lab specimens, including critical access hospital (CAH))* | 14X | 0311 | N/A |
| Skilled nursing facility (SNF) inpatient Part B | 22X | 0311 | 0770 |
| SNF outpatient | 23X | 0311 | 0770 |
| Rural health clinic (RHC) | 71X or 73X | 052X | 052X |
| Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) | 77X | 052X | 052X |
| CAH** | 85X | 0311, 096X, 097X, or 098X | 0770 |

* We don't require your CAH patients be physically present in the CAH when you collect the specimen, but they must be a CAH outpatient. Patients must get CAH outpatient services on the same day you or a CAH employee collect the specimen, or a CAH provider-based entity must collect the specimen.

** CAHs electing Method II report professional services under revenue codes 096X, 097X, or 098X.

Payment Information

Professional Claims

We pay for screening Pap tests and HPV screenings under the Clinical Laboratory Fee Schedule (CLFS) and screening pelvic exams under the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (PFS).

Like other PFS services, the non-participating provider reduction and limiting charge provisions apply to all screening Pap test and pelvic exam services.

Institutional Claims

Screening Pap test or pelvic exam payment depends on the facility type providing the service. Except RHCs, FQHCs, and CAHs, we pay HCPCS codes G0123, G0143, G0144, G0145, G0147, G0148, G0476, and P3000 under the CLFS. Table 8 lists the other payment types depending on setting.

Table 8. Screening Pap Test & Pelvic Exam Facility Payment Methods

| Facility Type | Screening Pap & HPV Test Payment System | Pelvic Exam Payment System |
|---|---|---|
| Hospital inpatient (Part B)* | Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) HCPCS code Q0091 | OPPS |
| Hospital outpatient* | OPPS HCPCS code Q0091 | OPPS |
| Hospital other Part B (non-patient lab specimens, including CAH)* | OPPS HCPCS code Q0091 | N/A |
| SNF inpatient Part B** | PFS HCPCS code Q0091 | PFS |
| SNF outpatient | PFS HCPCS code Q0091 | PFS |
| RHC | Part of the all-inclusive rate (AIR) payment | Part of AIR payment |
| FQHC | FQHC prospective payment system (PPS) | FQHC PPS |
| CAH | <p>Method I: 101% of reasonable technical components services cost</p> <p>Method II: 101% of reasonable technical components services cost, plus 115% of PFS professional components services non-facility rate</p> | <p>Method I: 101% of reasonable technical components services cost</p> <p>Method II: 101% of reasonable technical components services cost, plus 115% of PFS professional components services non-facility rate</p> |

* We pay Maryland inpatient or outpatient hospital services according to the Maryland State Cost Containment Plan.

** The SNF consolidated billing provision allows separate Part B screening Pap test, pelvic exam, and HPV screenings payment for patients in a skilled Medicare Part A stay; however, the SNF must submit these services on TOB 22X. The SNF must pay for the screening Pap test and pelvic exam other facility types provide for patients in a skilled Part A stay.

Note: For residents in a SNF under a Part A-covered stay, we exclude screening and preventive care from the SNF bundle. However, the SNF must still pay the provider for services and list the HCPCS code on the SNF bill for us to pay. See the [General Explanation of the Major Categories for SNF Consolidated Billing, Major Category IV-Additional Excluded Preventive and Screening Services](#) for more information.

Claim Denial Reasons

If a patient tries to get services before they're eligible, we may deny a screening Pap test, pelvic exam, and HPV screening in several situations, including:

- Patient (not high risk) got a covered screening within the past 2 years
- Patient (high risk) got a covered screening within the past year
- Patient (high risk) got a covered HPV screening within the past 5 years (at least 4 years and 11 months (59 months total) after the most recent HPV screening)

You may find specific payment decision information on the remittance advice (RA). The RA gives additional payment adjustment codes information. For more claims information, find your [Medicare Administrative Contractor's \(MAC's\) website](#).

Remittance Advice Information

[Health Care Payment and Remittance Advice](#) has more information.

Resources

- [National Cancer Institute: Cervical Cancer Information for Health Professionals](#)
- [Section 280.4 of the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapter 15 \(Screening Pap Smears\)](#)
- [Sections 30 and 40 of the Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Chapter 18 \(Screening Pap Smears and Screening Pelvic Exams\)](#)
- [U.S. Preventive Services Task Force \(USPSTF\) Screening for Cervical Cancer Recommendations](#)

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