

NEEDLE EMG BILLING

A frequent billing error seen is inadequate muscles studied to meet the criteria for a limb study.

A minimum of five muscles is required to bill a limb study.

When less than five muscles are tested in a limb, the correct CPT™ code to use is **95870** (unless the State has not updated their CPT™ codes, in which case the old code 95869 Limited Muscle Study would be used).

Unfortunately the CPT™ code book does not clearly specify how many muscles are needed for a full limb EMG as opposed to a limited study. However, the CPT™ Assistant Volume 14, issue 2 February 2004 does clarify the number of muscles required. This is based on the Federal Register, Vol. 62, No. 211, October 31, 1997, which states that for CPT™ codes 95860-95864, a minimum of five muscles must be studied.

CPT™ CODE	DESCRIPTOR (2008)
95860	Needle electromyography; one extremity with or without related paraspinal areas
95861	Needle electromyography; two extremities with or without related paraspinal areas
95863	Needle electromyography; three extremities with or without related paraspinal areas
95864	Needle electromyography; four extremities with or without related paraspinal areas
95869	Needle electromyography; thoracic paraspinal muscles
95870	Needle electromyography; limited study of muscles in one extremity or non-limb (axial) muscles (unilateral or bilateral), other than thoracic paraspinal, cranial nerve supplied muscles, or sphincters

Billed	Muscles Tested	Correct Coding
1 unit 95860	Left Abductor Pollicis Brevis	1 unit 95870
1 unit 95861	Bilateral Cervical Paraspinals, Triceps, Biceps, Deltoid, ECR, FCR, APB, FDI	1 unit 95861
1 unit 95861	Bilateral Cervical Paraspinals, Triceps, Biceps, Deltoid	2 units 95870
1 unit 95861	Right Triceps, Right Biceps, Right Deltoid, Right APB, Right FDI Left APB	1 unit 95860 and 1 unit 95870
1 unit 95863	Bilateral Cervical Paraspinals, Triceps, Biceps, Deltoid, ECR, FCR, APB, FDI Left Tibialis Anterior, Quadriceps, Lumbar Paraspinals	1 unit 95861 and 1 unit 95870
1 unit 95864	Bilateral Cervical Paraspinals, Triceps, Biceps, Deltoid, ECR, FCR, APB, FDI, Bilateral Lumbar Paraspinals	1 unit 95861 and 1 unit 95870
1 unit 95869	Bilateral Thoracic Paraspinals T2-T11	1 unit 95869
1 unit 95870	Bilateral Cervical paraspinals and T1-T2	1 unit 95870



SOURCES:

AANEM. Guidelines and Practice Parameters. Online. Internet Accessed 27/2/02; 20/8/04; 14/12/04 Available WWW: <http://www.aanem.net>

Federal Register, Vol. 62, No. 211, Friday, October 31, 1997. p. 59090.

AMA Press. CPT™ Assistant, Vol. 14, Issue 2, February 2004 pp.4-6; Issue 7, July 2004 pp.6 & 16.

AMA Press. Current Procedural Terminology CPT™ 2008 Professional Edition p.ssss

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