UNIFIED
WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE℠

Pelvic Exams: Standardize the Care. Ensure Accurate Coding.

Across Unified Women's Healthcare, our commitment to safe, professional, and consistent care includes the routine use of chaperones and standardized protocols during pelvic examinations.

To ensure our **documentation and coding accurately reflect the services being performed**, we are reinforcing standardized use of **CPT +99459** when a pelvic exam is completed.

This is not optional coding.

It is the appropriate mechanism recognized by national coding guidance to accurately report the additional clinical resources required for pelvic examinations.

Why this matters: Patient Safety, Provider Protection, and Compliance

Pelvic examinations are distinct, sensitive clinical services that require additional resources, including:

- Clinical staff support (chaperone utilization)
- Exam room preparation and workflow coordination
- Dedicated exam supplies and kits
- Documentation of safety protocols and patient consent

National clinical and professional standards-including guidance supported by organizations such as the **AMA and ACOG**-recognize chaperone utilization as a best practice and key component of maintaining a safe care environment.

Consistent use of +99459 ensures we:

- **Standardize care delivery and documentation**
- **Support compliance and accurate coding**
- **Reinforce professional safeguards for both patients and providers**
- **Reduce clinical and legal risk exposure**

Importantly, allegations related to unchaperoned sensitive exams may carry serious legal implications. Standardized documentation and chaperone practices are critical protections.

Major Payer Update: Validation of Correct Coding

Following ACOG advocacy, **Cigna reversed its payment decision** and now covers **CPT +99459 effective October 11**, when billed appropriately with E/M codes: **99202-99205 and 99212-99215**.

This reversal reinforces that +99459 is recognized as a legitimate and appropriate reporting mechanism when pelvic examinations are performed in accordance with coding guidance.

Important Reminder:

+99459 may still be billed if a patient declines a chaperone, provided refusal is clearly documented.

Documentation must reflect:

- Chaperone present **or**
- Patient refusal documented

Either scenario supports accurate reporting of the service performed.

What +99459 Represents:

Introduced in **January 2024**, CPT +99459 was created to recognize the additional clinical work and practice resources required during pelvic examinations. It is an **add-on code** billed in addition to the primary WW and E/M service and reflects the appropriate reporting of staff time, safety protocols, and exam-related resources.

Call to Action: Compliance Requires Consistency

Clinicians and Practices:

- Document pelvic exams clearly as distinct services
- Record chaperone presence or refusal every time
- Add **+99459** to eligible Well Woman and E/M encounters
- Audit encounters billed with **99202-99215** to ensure coding aligns with documentation

Accurate coding is a shared responsibility. Underreporting services is a compliance issue-just as overreporting is. Standardizing documentation and CPT +99459 use ensures our medical record reflects the full scope of care delivered and reinforces the standard of care across the Unified network.

Learn More

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