

RT101 CPT CODING FOR CYTOPATHOLOGY

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Addendum to CPT Article

Effective in 2006 two new codes were approved for immediate cytologic evaluations, replacing 88329 and 88161 for intra-procedural cytology. 88333 [Pathology consultation during surgery...cytologic examination (eg squash prep, touch prep), initial site] and 88334 [Pathology consultation during surgery...cytologic examination (eg squash prep, touch prep), each additional site] are added to 88329 family of codes. The use of these codes is not limited to intraoperative situations and may be applicable to any cytologic immediate evaluation on tissue requiring immediate evaluation, eg. CT guided core biopsy of liver mass or bronchial brushings. In the example of the latter, these codes are billable only if performed intra-procedurally and medically necessary to determine the necessity for additional sampling or performance of additional procedures.

88333 is intended only for the initial cytologic preparation of a specimen with each additional site codable as 88334. The 88334 is analogous to the 88332 for additional frozen blocks. In the event that both frozen section(s) and touch prep(s) are evaluated on the same specimen, bill the initial/additional frozen section(s), then code the touch preps as 88334, not 88333, since the portion of the touch prep service which is subsumed as gross examination is already included in the 88331 code.

There are edits prohibiting the billing of these codes with any of the 88160 code family, 88329 and 88172. Use a -59 modifier if billing these codes on separate specimens.