

Documentation Guidelines for Choosing CPT Procedure Codes

To determine which CPT procedure code to use you must document three elements of the exam:

- 1) Patient History
- 2) Physical Exam
- 3) Medical Decision Making

Patient History

All patients must complete a HCFA approved (MHQ) Medical History Questionnaire. (OBC's Medical History Questionnaire meets this criteria.)

During subsequent visits you must reference the initial Medical History Questionnaire; however the patient is not required to complete a new MHQ.

Chief Complaint is a short summary describing the symptom or problem resulting in the visit, using the patient's own words.

History of Present Illness (HPI) is a chronological description of the patient's present illness beginning with first sign/symptom and proceeding to the present. Included are the following:

- Symptom description of problem, pain, discomfort
- Location right, left, or both eyes
- Quality type or description of pain (sharp, dull, ache)
- Severity intensity of discomfort/symptom
- Duration measures symptom/sign in increments of time
- Timing onset of discomfort (in bright light, while reading)
- Context activities or factors which influence symptom/sign
- Modifying Factors factors that improve or worsen symptom/sign (Tylenol makes pain better)

Review of Symptoms (ROS)

- Included on Medical History Questionnaire
- Present or prior symptoms associated with body systems

Past, Family, and Social History

- Past history includes previous illness, injuries, treatments
- Family history includes health history of immediate family members
- Social history includes drug/alcohol use, sexual history, and marital status

If patient completes Medical History Questionnaire or you document your review of previous Medical History Questionnaire in addition to Chief Complaint and 4 elements of HPI, then you have performed a comprehensive history.

ELEMENTS REQUIRED FOR EACH TYPE OF HISTORY

Type of History	Problem-Focused	Expanded Problem-Focused	Detailed	Comprehensive
	Chief Complaint	Chief Complaint	Chief Complaint	Chief Complaint
HPI	1-3 elements	1-3 elements	4 elements	4 elements
ROS	None	Ocular ROS	Ocular ROS	Ocular ROS and 9 additional system
Past, Family, Social	None	None	1 item from past, family, social	All completed