Primary HPV Screening for Cervical Cancer

Insurance Coverage and Coding Overview

Primary human papillomavirus (HPV) screening is an FDA-approved and guideline-recommended strategy for the early detection of high-risk types of HPV that are more likely to cause cervical pre-cancers. Primary HPV screening predicts future risk of cervical pre-cancer and cancer better than cytology alone. Transitioning to primary HPV screening is a key step to enable self-collection testing.

American Cancer Society Recommendation for Cervical Cancer Screening

Primary HPV screening every 3-5 years is the preferred screening strategy for women and people with a cervix aged 25-65.

USPSTF 2018 Recommendation

Primary high-risk HPV screening received a **grade A** recommendation to screen for cervical cancer.*

*The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening every 5 years for cervical cancer with high-risk HPV testing alone for women aged 30 to 65 years.

Top 25 Commercial Payors

- 100% cover primary HPV screening as of January 2025.
- These payors represent nearly 80% of the United States commercially insured population.

State Medicaid Plans

Most state Medicaid plans follow the USPSTF recommendations and therefore cover primary HPV screening. Check with your state's Medicaid office to learn if primary HPV screening is covered for cervical cancer screening.

Medicare

HPV screening is only covered as a part of co-testing. Expanding national coverage for primary HPV screening should be prioritized.

Common CPT Code Questions

Question	Answer	Additional Information
What CPT code is used for high-risk HPV testing for primary screening?	**CPT code 87626.**	Decisions about the specific code(s) to report are the responsibility of the performing laboratory.
Is CPT 87626 a Category I code?	**Yes, CPT 87626 is a Category I CPT code.**	Other categories of codes (e.g., Category III) may not be recognized by all payors and could create coverage and reimbursement challenges.
What is the 2025 Medicare Payment Rate for CPT code 87626?	**The 2025 Medicare Payment Rate for CPT code 87626 is $70.20.**	Medicaid and private payor reimbursement rates may vary.

This resource was developed by the IT/EHR Needs Workgroup as a part of the American Cancer Society National Roundtable on Cervical Cancer's Primary HPV Screening Initiative, which aims to support the transition and implementation of primary HPV screening across the United States.

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