

Flow Cytometry Policy, Professional and Facility

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THIS REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

This policy is applicable to UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage Plans offered by UnitedHealthcare and its affiliates.

You are responsible for submission of accurate claims. This reimbursement policy is intended to ensure that you are reimbursed based on the code or codes that correctly describe the health care services provided. UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage reimbursement policies use Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®*), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), or other coding guidelines. References to CPT or other sources are for definitional purposes only and do not imply any right to reimbursement.

This reimbursement policy applies to all health care services billed on UB04 forms (CMS 1450) and to those billed on CMS 1500 forms. Coding methodology, industry-standard reimbursement logic, regulatory requirements, benefits design and other factors are considered in developing reimbursement policy.

This information is intended to serve only as a general resource regarding UnitedHealthcare's Medicare Advantage reimbursement policy for the services described and is not intended to address every aspect of a reimbursement situation. Accordingly, UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage may use reasonable discretion in interpreting and applying this policy to health care services provided in a particular case. Further, the policy does not address all issues related to reimbursement for health care services provided to UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage enrollees. Other factors affecting reimbursement may supplement, modify or, in some cases, supersede this policy. These factors may include, but are not limited to: legislative mandates, the facility or other provider contracts, the enrollee's benefit coverage documents**, and/or other reimbursement, medical or drug policies. Finally, this policy may not be implemented exactly the same way on the different electronic claims processing systems used by UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage due to programming or other constraints; however, UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage strives to minimize these variations.

UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage may modify this reimbursement policy at any time to comply with changes in CMS policy and other national standard coding guidelines by publishing a new version of the reimbursement policy on this website. However, the information presented in this reimbursement policy is accurate and current as of the date of publication. UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage encourages physicians and other health care professionals to keep current with any CMS policy changes and/or billing requirements by referring to the CMS or your local carrier website regularly. Facilities can sign up for regular distributions for policy or regulatory changes directly from CMS and/or your local carrier. UnitedHealthcare's Medicare Advantage reimbursement policies do not include notations regarding prior authorization requirements.

**CPT Copyright American Medical Association. All rights reserved. CPT® is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association.*

*** For more information on a specific enrollee's benefit coverage, please call the customer service number on the back of the member ID card.*

Table of Contents

[Application](#)

[Policy](#)

[Overview](#)

[Reimbursement Guidelines](#)

[Cell Markers](#)

[Limitations](#)

[Cell Cycle or DNA Analysis](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Questions and Answers](#)

[Resources](#)

[History](#)**Application**

This reimbursement policy applies to all Medicare Advantage products and for network provider services reported using the UB04 and CMS 1500 form or its electronic equivalent or its successor form.

Policy**Overview**

This policy describes the reimbursement methodology for flow cytometry services when billed with designated conditions. Certain services are also subject to specific frequency limitations.

Reimbursement Guidelines

NOTE: Procedure codes appearing in policy documents are included only as a general reference tool for each policy. They may not be all-inclusive.

Cell Markers

UnitedHealthcare will consider reimbursement of the following flow cytometry immunophenotyping of cell surface marker procedure codes when billed for any of the conditions listed below:

Procedure Code(s)

88184	88185	88187	88188	88189	
-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	--

Condition(s)

- Cytopenias, lymphomas, leukemia, myeloproliferative and lymphoproliferative disorders, or myelodysplastic syndrome.
- B-cell monitoring for immunosuppressive disorders.
- T-cell monitoring for HIV infection and AIDS.
- Mast cell neoplasms.
- Paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria.
- Preoperative or post-operative monitoring of individuals who will undergo or who have undergone organ transplantation.
- Plasma cell disorders.
- Primary immunodeficiencies (PIDs).
- Primary platelet disorders, non-neoplastic.
- Red cell and white cell disorders, non-neoplastic.
- Malignant neoplasms.

UnitedHealthcare will not consider reimbursement of the flow cytometry immunophenotyping of cell surface marker procedure codes above for any other conditions.

Limitations**Two Specimens per Date of Service**

Procedure codes 88187, 88188, and 88189 are reimbursable up to two specimens per date of service.

Procedures Not Separately Reimbursable

Procedure codes 86355, 86356, 86357, 86359, 86360, 86361, 86367 for cell enumeration are not separately reimbursable if submitted in conjunction with codes 88184, 88185, 88187, 88188, 88189 per date of service.

Single Unit Use Only

Procedure codes 86355, 86357, 86359, 86360, 86361, or 86367 are reimbursable as single units only per date of service.

Cell Cycle or DNA Analysis

Procedure code 88182 (flow cytometry-derived DNA content (DNA Index) or cell proliferative activity (S-phase fraction or % S-phase) is not reimbursable for prognostic or therapeutic purposes in the routine clinical management of cancers.

Definitions

Two specimens	Two units (per code)
Single unit only	One unit

Questions and Answers

1	<p>Q: Is the two specimen/units per procedure code limitation based on individual provider per member?</p> <p>A: The two specimen/units per procedure code limitation is applicable regardless of billing and/or rendering provider (any individual provider OR any facility) for each individual member for the same date of service.</p>
2	<p>Q: Does UnitedHealthcare require procedure codes 86355, 86356, 86357, 86359, 86360, 86361 and 86367 to be submitted on the same claim as procedure codes 88187, 88188 and 88189?</p> <p>A: Same or different claim regardless of billing and/or rendering provider (any individual OR any facility) for each individual member for the same date of service.</p>
3	<p>Q: Is the single units only limitation based on individual provider per member?</p> <p>A: The single units only limitation is applicable regardless of billing and/or rendering provider (any individual OR any facility) for each individual member for the same date of service.</p>
4	<p>Q: Does the single units only limitation apply to each procedure code individually or do all count toward the same limit?</p> <p>A: The frequency limitation applies to each procedure code individually.</p>

Resources

American Medical Association (AMA) Current Procedural Terminology (CPT®)

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services: PFS Relative Value Files



UnitedHealthcare® Medicare Advantage
Reimbursement Policy
CMS 1500
UB04
Policy Number 2025R8213A

History	
12/01/2025	New Policy
9/1/2025	Policy published