

# Carcinoembryonic Antigen

CEA

CPT: 82378

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## CMS National Coverage Policy

### Coverage Indications, Limitations, and/or Medical Necessity

Carcinoembryonic antigen (CEA) is a protein polysaccharide found in some carcinomas. It is effective as a biochemical marker for monitoring the response of certain malignancies to therapy.

### Indications

CEA may be medically necessary for follow-up of patients with colorectal carcinoma. It would however only be medically necessary at treatment decision-making points. In some clinical situations (e.g. adenocarcinoma of the lung, small cell carcinoma of the lung, and some gastrointestinal carcinomas) when a more specific marker is not expressed by the tumor, CEA may be a medically necessary alternative marker for monitoring. Preoperative CEA may also be helpful in determining the post-operative adequacy of surgical resection and subsequent medical management. In general, a single tumor marker will suffice in following patients with colorectal carcinoma or other malignancies that express such tumor markers.

In following patients who have had treatment for colorectal carcinoma, ASCO guideline suggests that if resection of liver metastasis would be indicated, it is recommended that post-operative CEA testing be performed every two to three months in patients with initial stage II or stage III disease for at least two years after diagnosis.

For patients with metastatic solid tumors which express CEA, CEA may be measured at the start of the treatment and with subsequent treatment cycles to assess the tumor's response to therapy.

### Limitations

Serum CEA determinations are generally not indicated more frequently than once per chemotherapy treatment cycle for patients with metastatic solid tumors which express CEA or every two months post-surgical treatment for patients who have had colorectal carcinoma. However, it may be proper to order the test more frequently in certain situations, for example, when there has been a significant change from prior CEA level or a significant change in patient status which could reflect disease progression or recurrence.

Testing with a diagnosis of an in situ carcinoma is not reasonably done more frequently than once, unless the result is abnormal, in which case the test may be repeated once.

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Visit [QuestDiagnostics.com/MLCP](https://www.questdiagnostics.com/MLCP) to view current limited coverage tests, reference guides, and policy information.

To view the complete policy and the full list of codes, please refer to the CMS website reference

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The ICD10 codes listed below are the top diagnosis codes currently utilized by ordering physicians for the limited coverage test highlighted above that are also listed as medically supportive under Medicare's limited coverage policy. **If you are ordering this test for diagnostic reasons that are not covered under Medicare policy, an Advance Beneficiary Notice form is required.**

There is a frequency associated with this test. Please refer to the Limitations or Utilization Guidelines section on previous page(s).

Code	Description
C18.0	Malignant neoplasm of cecum
C18.2	Malignant neoplasm of ascending colon
C18.4	Malignant neoplasm of transverse colon
C18.7	Malignant neoplasm of sigmoid colon
C18.9	Malignant neoplasm of colon, unspecified
C20	Malignant neoplasm of rectum
C25.0	Malignant neoplasm of head of pancreas
C25.9	Malignant neoplasm of pancreas, unspecified
C34.11	Malignant neoplasm of upper lobe, right bronchus or lung
C34.90	Malignant neoplasm of unsp part of unsp bronchus or lung
C50.411	Malig neoplasm of upper-outer quadrant of right female breast
C50.412	Malig neoplasm of upper-outer quadrant of left female breast
C50.911	Malignant neoplasm of unsp site of right female breast
C50.912	Malignant neoplasm of unspecified site of left female breast
C50.919	Malignant neoplasm of unsp site of unspecified female breast
R79.89	Other specified abnormal findings of blood chemistry
R97.0	Elevated carcinoembryonic antigen [CEA]
R97.8	Other abnormal tumor markers
Z85.038	Personal history of malignant neoplasm of large intestine
Z85.3	Personal history of malignant neoplasm of breast

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**Disclaimer:**

This diagnosis code reference guide is provided as an aid to physicians and office staff in determining when an ABN (Advance Beneficiary Notice) is necessary. Diagnosis codes must be applicable to the patient's symptoms or conditions and must be consistent with documentation in the patient's medical record. Quest Diagnostics does not recommend any diagnosis codes and will only submit diagnosis information provided to us by the ordering physician or his/her designated staff. The CPT codes provided are based on AMA guidelines and are for informational purposes only. CPT coding is the sole responsibility of the billing party. Please direct any questions regarding coding to the payer being billed.

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