

## Combining Well-Child and Sick Visits

BLUECARE TENNESSEE

### Recommendations from the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

TennCare Kids' screening guidelines allow you to receive reimbursement for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) checkups performed at the same time as other visits.

Episodic, acute care and sport-required visits are all opportunities to increase preventive care, administer vaccines and give health education. There is no copay, deductible or coinsurance to collect following an EPSDT exam.

You may bill for both a sick and well visit on the same day if the following requirements are met:

- If you identify a problem on the same day as a preventive medicine service, you may report an additional evaluation and management (E/M) service.
- The problem should be significant and require you to perform the key components of the E/M service.
- If the problem is insignificant or doesn't require work-up beyond a normal preventive visit, please do not report another E/M code.
- Documentation for the visit must reflect additional work.
- If the problem-oriented portion of the visit is based on time, documentation should address the time spent and include a summary of the problems.
- There doesn't need to be a separate note, but the documentation should clearly reflect a separate problem.
- Billing for a combined visit offers you the greatest opportunity for reimbursement, but if you choose to bill only the sick or well visit, here's something to consider. Well-visit claims reimburse you at a higher rate than sick visits, plus we can count the well checks in our EPSDT reports to CMS.
- BlueCare Tennessee doesn't limit well-child visits to one per year/365 days. We allow and provide coverage for interperiodic screenings, according to these guidelines from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) *EPSDT - A Guide for States: Coverage in the Medicaid Benefit for Children and Adolescents*:
  - "EPSDT also requires coverage of medically necessary 'interperiodic' screening outside of the state's periodicity schedule. Coverage for such screenings is required based on an indication of a medical need to diagnose an illness or condition that was not present at the regularly scheduled screening or to determine if there has been a change in a previously diagnosed illness or condition that requires additional services. The determination of whether a screening service outside of the periodicity schedule is necessary may be made by the child's physician or dentist, or by a health, developmental, or educational professional who comes into contact with a child outside of the formal health care system. This includes, for example, personnel working for state early intervention or special education programs, Head Start, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. A state may not limit the number of medically necessary screenings a child receives and may not require prior authorization for either periodic or 'interperiodic' screenings."

**For more details about  
TennCare Kids/EPSTD exams,**

please visit the TennCare Kids ToolKit  
in the “Tools and Resources” provider  
section of **[bluecare.bcbst.com](https://bluecare.bcbst.com)**.