

An Informative Guide to Lab Billing

At EvergreenHealth, we want you to have the best possible experience in achieving your best health. Part of that experience involves making sure you are fully informed about all aspects of your care – this includes insurance and billing.

Lab tests can sometimes be difficult to understand when it comes to insurance coverage. When your physician orders a lab test, he or she enters a specific diagnosis code for each test ordered. This code gives the reason why your doctor believes you need that lab test in order to maintain your health. This code also helps determine how your insurance coverage will be applied.

Common diagnosis code examples include:

- A previously diagnosed condition (for example, diabetes, high cholesterol, low thyroid)
- A current symptom (for example, fatigue, weight gain, abdominal pain)
- A previous abnormal test result (for example, elevated glucose, abnormal urine analysis)
- Medication monitoring (for the long-term use of certain drugs such as anticoagulants, steroids, insulin)
- Routine screening (*which can be used only if no other diagnosis code applies*)

There are hundreds of insurance plans, each one with different coverage. Some have different benefits for routine services versus non-routine services. A lab test billed with a code for a previously diagnosed condition, current symptom, previous abnormal test result or medication monitoring will not be paid under your routine/preventive benefits (and may be applied to your deductible). Some tests may not be covered at all by certain insurance plans and therefore you may be responsible for paying for them.

It's important to note that **lab work will likely not be billed as "routine screening" – even if your office visit is for a wellness exam or physical – if another of the above diagnosis codes applies.** As it says above, "routine screening" may be used as a code only if no other diagnosis code applies.

Also important to note: If you are denied coverage for a lab test, we can verify whether the test was billed appropriately.

If you are uncertain about getting the lab tests that are being ordered today, you have the option to schedule your lab work on a different date that is convenient for you – giving you time to review your coverage.

We look forward to partnering with you in achieving your best health.