AMA CPT® licensing overview

The Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) code set, created and maintained by the American Medical Association, is the language of medicine today and the code to its future. This system of terminology is the most widely accepted medical nomenclature used to report medical procedures and services under public and private health insurance programs.

CPT coding is also used for administrative management purposes such as claims processing and developing guidelines for medical care review. Each year, via a rigorous, evidence-based and transparent process, the independent CPT Editorial Panel revises, creates or deletes hundreds of codes in order to reflect current medical practice. CPT is copyrighted by the AMA and as such must be licensed to be used in electronic products or other forms.

Who needs a license to use the CPT content?

Any individual or entity using CPT content needs permission or a license (i.e., an end-user agreement, end user license agreement, or other written agreement authorizing use of CPT codes) from the AMA or an authorized distributor.

Examples where a license and royalty payment are required (not an exhaustive list):

- Use of CPT content to develop, test, maintain, and service products that use or rely on CPT
- Use of CPT content in products that are licensed or distributed by a vendor, company or other third party
- Distribution of products that require use of CPT content
- Any proposed use of CPT content including the creation of derivative works of CPT content, translations or localized versions of CPT content

How are licensing royalties determined?

AMA strives to develop licensing models that are fair, transparent, consistent and easy to apply. AMA applies different pricing models to determine the applicable royalty. AMA applies royalties for the use of CPT codes and descriptors based on the type of product in which the CPT content is used and the type of user of the product.
If you have a question or would like to license CPT content, please submit your information.