



AAPOS Policy Statement

Refractions in Children

Childhood eye disease and vision abnormalities require a thorough ophthalmologic evaluation. In addition to a complete examination of the structures of the eyes and assessment of vision, further diagnostic testing is often required. Refraction is an important diagnostic test in the evaluation and treatment of eye disease in children. Refraction is the determination of the refractive error of the eye. Refractive error can affect the eyes' ability to focus light clearly which causes reduced visual acuity. In children, refractive error problems can cause amblyopia (permanent vision loss) and/or strabismus (misalignment of the eyes). Amblyopia and strabismus can often be treated in childhood with corrective lenses as determined by refraction. If left untreated, however, these conditions can lead to irreversible, life-long vision loss.

Refraction is specifically excluded as a component of any ophthalmology examination codes (92002-92014) or part of and Evaluation/ Management (E/M) procedure (99201-99253).

The refraction should be documented and reported with CPT* code 92015 in addition to the appropriate ophthalmologic or E/M service which is also provided, documented, and billed.

The American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS) considers refractions in children to be a medically necessary, separately identifiable, and reimbursable service.

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