

This guide is published to educate dentists and others in the dental community on selection and reporting of diagnostic imaging procedures documented with “Image Capture Only” codes located in the CDT Code’s Diagnostics category of service.

Introduction

All imaging procedure codes are within the “Diagnostic Imaging” subcategory of the Diagnostics category of service. These codes are further divided into four sub-subcategories. This parsing enables unambiguous reporting of discrete radiographic and photographic image capture and interpretation procedures delivered by different practitioners.

These four sub-subcategories are:

- 1) “Image Capture with Interpretation” – Capture and Interpretation delivered in the same setting
- 2) “Image Capture Only” – Capture by Practitioner not associated with Interpretation and Report
- 3) “Interpretation and Report Only” – Interpretation and Report by a Practitioner Not Associated with Image Capture
- 4) “Post Processing of Image or Image Sets” – For separate manipulations of digital imaging data

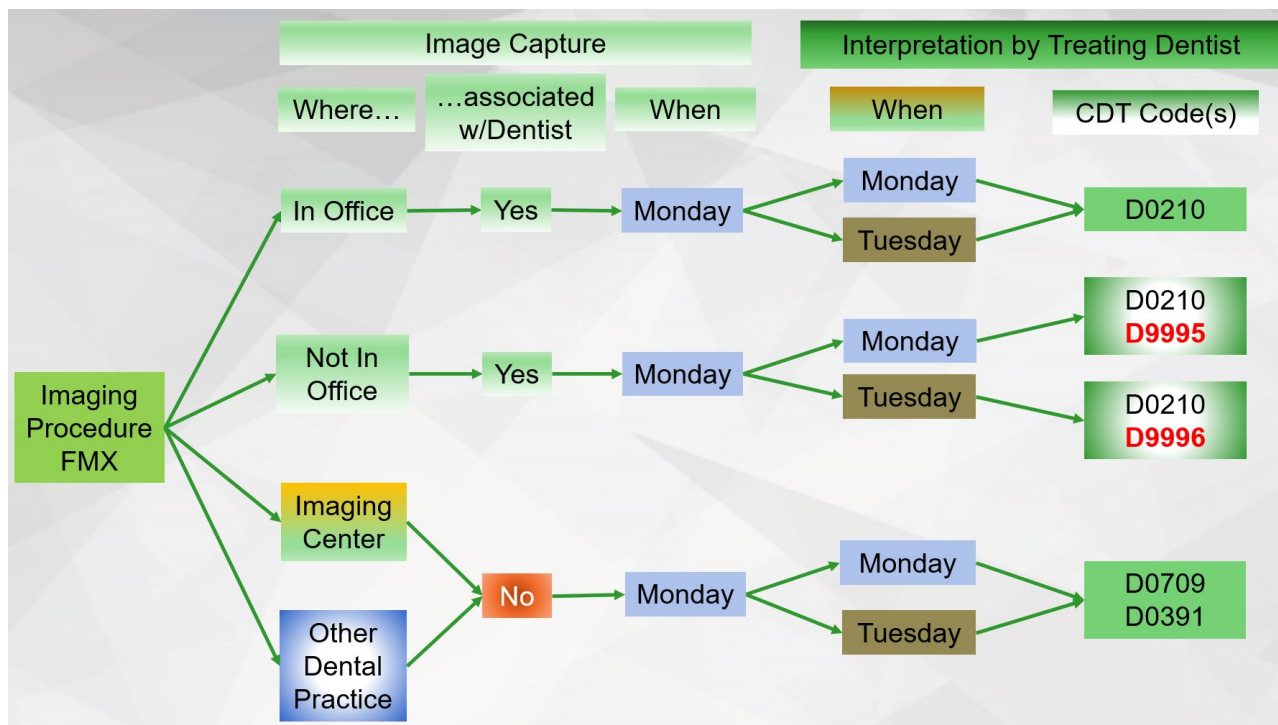
Discussion – “Image Capture Only” Procedures and Their Codes

These CDT codes document discrete procedures that do not replace or duplicate codes in any other sub-subcategory. A dentist and practice staff should consider the following points when coding –

- a. “Image Capture Only” codes apply when capture and interpretation are separate procedures performed by different practitioners or when the patient location (image capture) and dentist location (image interpretation) are not the same.
- b. “Image Capture Only” procedures are **not limited to** patient encounters via teledentistry.
- c. The image interpretation procedure is reported separately with a CDT code in the “Interpretation and Report Only” sub-subcategory (“D0391 interpretation of diagnostic image by a practitioner not associated by capture of the image, including report”)
- d. “Image Capture Only” and “Interpretation and Report Only” codes are per-image procedures, with the number of each on the date of service documented in the patient record and reported on the claim. **Note:** To avoid claim processing delays or inaccuracies, contact the dental benefit plan that will be adjudicating the claim to determine if each instance of a procedure completed should be reported in the claim service line’s “Quantity” field or on separate claim service line Procedure Code fields.

Image Capture and Interpretation Procedure Coding Decision Tree

This decision tree provides guidance on appropriate procedure coding for four scenarios where the image capture location varies: 1) in the treating dentist’s office; 2) in a separate office associated with the treating dentist; 3) at an independent imaging center; and 4) at another dentist’s practice. Each scenario will be discussed separately following this decision tree graphic.



1) Treating Dentist’s Office Scenario

A patient is in the dentist’s practice office on Monday for a hygiene appointment during which the hygienist captures a full mouth complete series of radiographic images (aka FMX). These images are interpreted by the dentist in this office either on the same day (Monday) or the next day (Tuesday). In this scenario the procedure is properly coded as D0210 because **all aspects of the procedure (image capture and interpretation) are completed within the same practice office.**

Please note that: a) the D0210 CDT Code entry does not specify what day the dentist must interpret the images in order for the procedure to be completed; and b) the date of service for the completed D0210 procedure is the date on which the dentist interprets the image.

Can a dentist postpone interpretation to a later date so that the procedure may be reported on a separate date of service from other captured and interpreted images? The ADA’s *Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct*, specifically the principle of Veracity (“truthfulness”) posted online at [Code of Ethics | American Dental Association \(ada.org\)](https://www.ada.org/code-of-ethics) states that a dentist who incorrectly describes on a third party claim form a dental procedure in order to receive a greater payment or reimbursement is engaged in making an unethical, false or misleading representation to such third party.

2) Separate Office Associated With the Treating Dentist Scenario

The patient and practice staff member (e.g., hygienist) are in another practice location where diagnostic imaging equipment is available (e.g., an extended care facility with a dental operator). **Image capture is on Monday in a real-time environment, while the dentist in the primary practice location.** The dentist receives and interprets the images immediately.

- a) In this scenario the practice staff member (e.g., hygienist) is associated with the dentist interpreting the radiographs. Therefore the FMX procedure is properly coded as D0210 with Monday as the date of service since all components of the procedure (Capture and Interpretation) are completed on that day.
- b) Also, since this a single day virtual encounter the dentist would also report “D9995 teledentistry – synchronous; real-time encounter.” Here again Monday is the date of service.

But what if image capture is on Monday and the interpretation is on Tuesday? There is one change to proper coding and reporting:

- D0210 is again reported for the FMX with Tuesday as the Date of Service since the interpretation component of the FMX procedure is completed on that day.
- The teledentistry code changes to “D9996 teledentistry – asynchronous; information stored and forwarded to the dentist for subsequent review” with Monday as the Date of Service (assuming the captured image was transmitted on that day).

3) Independent Imaging Center Scenario

Equipment problems within the dentist’s practice necessitate referring a patient of record to an independent imaging center where the radiographs (FMX) are captured. Images are captured on Monday and the dentist receives them on the same day. These images are interpreted by the dentist in the practice office either on the same day (Monday) or the next day (Tuesday). In this scenario the image capture and the interpretation procedures are independent and reported separately.

The capture procedure is documented and reported with code D0709 with Monday’s date as the date of service. Interpretation is reported separately with code D0391 and the date of service dependent on which day the dentist reviews the image (Monday or Tuesday). Proper coding requires use of the two CDT codes because **the image capture procedure and the image interpretation procedure are completed by different individuals**, who in this scenario are also in different locations.

4) Another Dentist’s Practice Scenario

This scenario is operationally the same as the Imaging Center Scenario.

- The capture procedure is documented and reported with code D0709 with Monday’s date as the date of service.
- Interpretation is reported separately with code D0391 and the date of service dependent on which day the dentist reviews the image (Monday or Tuesday).
- Proper coding requires use of the two CDT codes because **the image capture procedure and the image interpretation procedure are completed by different individuals**, who in this scenario are also in different locations.

Summary

- a) With one exception (D0709 for an FMX) all “Image Capture Only” procedures address acquisition of a single image.
 - This differs from several codes in the “Image Capture and Interpretation” sub-subcategory that parse procedures by the number of like images captured (e.g., one, two and three bitewings; first periapical and each additional periapical).
- b) There is no “Image Capture Only” procedure for a vertical bitewing image as the descriptor for D0708 states that the image axis may be vertical or horizontal.
- c) For “Image Capture Only” procedures when more than one of a type of image is captured on date of service (e.g., D0708 for a bitewing) the procedure may either be reported once and the number of images captured is reported in the claim Quantity field or on separate claim service line Procedure Code fields. Contacting the dental benefit plan that will be adjudicating the claim to determine the preferred method for reporting is recommended.
 - Date of Service is date of image capture.
- d) Interpretation reported separately with D0391. This is also a per image procedure that is either reported once and the number of images interpreted is reported in the claim Quantity field or on separate claim service line Procedure Code fields. Contacting the dental benefit plan that will be adjudicating the claim to determine the preferred method for reporting is recommended.

- Date of Service is date of image interpretation.
- e) As noted in the procedure coding decision tree, reporting separate image capture and image interpretation procedures is not limited to a teledentistry encounter.
- f) The following table compares and contrasts the CDT Code entries for procedures reported with “Image Capture Only” codes and their comparable “Image Capture and Interpretation” codes.

NOTE: There are codes in the “Image Capture and Interpretation” sub-subcategory that do not have comparable codes in the “Image Capture Only” sub-subcategory.

<i>Image Capture Only</i>		<i>Image Capture and Interpretation</i>	
D0380	cone beam CT image capture with limited field of view – less than one whole jaw	D0364	cone beam CT image capture and interpretation with limited field of view – less than one whole jaw
D0381	cone beam CT image capture with field of view of one full dental arch – mandible	D0365	cone beam CT image capture and interpretation with field of view of one full dental arch – mandible
D0382	cone beam CT image capture with field of view of one full dental arch – maxilla with or without cranium	D0386	cone beam CT image capture and interpretation with field of view of one full dental arch – maxilla with or without cranium
D0383	cone beam CT image capture with field of view of both jaws, with or without cranium	D0367	cone beam CT image capture and interpretation with field of view of both jaws, with or without cranium
D0384	cone beam CT image capture for TMJ series including two or more exposures	D0368	cone beam CT image capture and interpretation for TMJ series including two or more exposures
D0385	maxillofacial MRI image capture	D0369	maxillofacial MRI image capture and interpretation
D0386	maxillofacial ultrasound image capture	D0370	maxillofacial ultrasound image capture and interpretation
D0387	intraoral tomosynthesis – comprehensive series of radiographic images – image capture only A radiographic survey of the whole mouth intended to display the crowns and roots of all teeth, periapical areas, interproximal areas and alveolar bone including edentulous areas.	D0372	intraoral tomosynthesis – comprehensive series of radiographic images A radiographic survey of the whole mouth intended to display the crowns and roots of all teeth, periapical areas, interproximal areas and alveolar bone including edentulous areas.
D0388	intraoral tomosynthesis – bitewing radiographic image – image capture only	D0373	intraoral tomosynthesis – bitewing radiographic image
D0389	intraoral tomosynthesis – periapical radiographic image – image capture only	D0374	intraoral tomosynthesis – periapical radiographic image
D0701	panoramic radiographic image – image capture only	D0330	panoramic radiographic image

<i>Image Capture Only</i>		<i>Image Capture and Interpretation</i>	
D0702	2-D cephalometric radiographic image – image capture only	D0340	2D cephalometric radiographic image – acquisition, measurement and analysis Image of the head made using a cephalostat to standardize anatomic positioning, and with reproducible x-ray beam geometry.
D0703	2-D oral/facial photographic image obtained intra-orally or extra-orally – image capture only	D0350	2D photographic image obtained intra-orally or extra-orally
D0705	extra-oral posterior dental radiographic image – image capture only Image limited to exposure of complete posterior teeth in both dental arches. This is a unique image that is not derived from another image.	D0251	extra-oral posterior radiographic image Image limited to exposure of complete posterior teeth in both dental arches. This is a unique image that is not derived from another image.
D0706	intraoral – occlusal radiographic image – image capture only	D0240	intraoral – occlusal radiographic image
D0707	intraoral – periapical radiographic image – image capture only	D0220	intraoral – first periapical image
		D0230	intraoral – each additional radiographic image
D0708	intraoral – bitewing radiographic image – image capture only Image axis may be horizontal or vertical.	D0270	bitewing – single radiographic image
		D0272	bitewings – two radiographic images
		D0273	bitewings – three radiographic images
		D0274	bitewings – four radiographic images
		D0277	vertical bitewings – 7 to 8 radiographic images
D0709	intraoral – comprehensive series of radiographic images – image capture only A radiographic survey of the whole mouth intended to display the crowns and roots of all teeth, periapical areas, interproximal areas and alveolar bone including edentulous areas.	D0210	intraoral – comprehensive series of radiographic images A radiographic survey of the whole mouth intended to display the crowns and roots of all teeth, periapical areas, interproximal areas and alveolar bone including edentulous areas.

Questions or Assistance?

Call 800-621-8099 or send an email to dentalcode@ada.org

Notes:

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