3D Surface Scan Coding Guide

This guide is to educate dentists and others in the dental community on the schema for documenting 3D diagostic imaging procedures for dates of service beginning January 1, 2023.

> NOTE: This guide is an introduction to 3D imaging procedures and their reporting. The ADA's separate *CDT Companion* publication contains a more comprehensive discussion of 3D imaging, illustrated through a variety of clinical scenarios. (Available at: [ADA Catalog professional resources for dental coding | American Dental Association Online Store](#))

Introduction

As of January 1, 2023 codes for documenting and reporting three dimensional (3D) imaging procedures changed from a single code to a suite of four codes.

DELETED – ~~D0351   3D photographic image~~
~~This procedure is for dental or maxillofacial diagnostic purposes. Not applicable for a CAD-CAM procedure.~~

REPLACED WITH –

D0801   3D dental surface scan – direct

D0802   3D dental surface scan – indirect
A surface scan of a diagnostic cast.

D0803   3D facial surface scan – direct

D0804   3D facial surface scan – indirect
A surface scan of constructed facial features.

> Rationale   These new codes replace the now deleted "D0351 3D photographic image" code to: 1) enable greater specificity in procedure documentation and reporting; and 2) recognize that inclusion of "photographic" in the nomenclature does not acknowledge other image capture technologies (e.g., digital scanning).
>
> In these codes' nomenclatures the term "direct" means that the patient is present when the image is captured, and "indirect" means the patient is not present when the image is captured.

A number of Questions and Answers follow that are intended to provide readers with insight and understanding of the procedures and their appropriate documentation in patient records and on claims.

Questions and Answers

1. For the two "direct" procedures (D0801 and D0803) how do I decide if the image capture is a dental surface or a facial surface?

   The code selection decision depends on whether the 3D image captured has tooth structure (i.e., dentition) or facial features (i.e., soft tissues) as the primary focus.

   - When the image captures any aspect of tooth anatomy and gingiva (e.g., occlusion, missing or damaged teeth; stains or concretions) the procedure is dental surface scan that is reported with code D0801. A dental surface scan may be intra-oral or extra-oral.

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- When the image captures soft tissue that surrounds the oral cavity (e.g., to enable fabrication and delivery of a commissure splint or facial moulage) the procedure is a facial surface scan that is reported with code D0803. A facial surface scan is extra-oral.

The patient is present (e.g., in the operatory) when either of these direct surface scan procedures are performed.

2. What is the illumination source for these surface scans – reflected visible light; infared or ultraviolet light; ionizing radiation (e.g., X-rays)?

The illumination source is determined by the equipment selected by the dentist for these 3D image capture procedures. These CDT Code entries intentionally do not specify any such technical requirements as the intent is to document the nature and scope of the service, not the armamentaria used to deliver the procedure.

3. Does the term "scan" mean that these procedures are not reported for capture of still images or videos?

The CDT Code entries for these procedures do not specify whether the image must be static or capture motion so that the dentist may select either as appropriate for the patient's treatment plan and dental record.

4. When the image captured is what the dentist sees reflected in an intraoral mirror be considered direct or indirect?

This would be a direct procedure. Use of an intraoral mirror to visualize the image to be captured is a means to an end – and the patient must be present in order for a reflected image to be captured.

5. Which code is appropriate for a 3D image created by integrating a series of still images, video photography, or laser scanning photographs?

In this situation the images would have been captured and reported separately, using the applicable image capture procedure code. Creation of the integrated 3D image is a separate procedure that is reported with an appropriate "Post Processing of Image or Image Sets" code, either –

D0395 fusion of two or more 3D image volumes of one or more modalities

D0393   virtual treatment simulation using 3D image volume or surface scan
Virtual simulation of treatment including, but not limited to, dental implant placement, prosthetic reconstruction, orthognathic surgery and orthodontic tooth movement.

6. Would a 3D image captured using ultrasound be considered a dental or facial surface scan, and if so, would it be considered direct or indirect?

In this scenario illumination uses ultrasound technology. As the 3D image scanning codes do not specify the technology used to deliver the procedure, code selection is first determined by whether tooth anatomy and gingiva or soft tissue around the oral cavity are are captured, and second whether the patient is present during the procedure. Any of the four codes are candidates.

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7. D0801 through D0804 are published in the CDT manual's "Image Capture With Interpretation" section. How would I document this procedure when the image capture occurs outside the dentist's practice, and the interpretation is completed at a different location?

> In this scenario the scanning procedure would be reported with "D0999 unspecified diagnostic procedure, by report" nd interpretation with "D0391 interpretation of diagnostic image by a practitioner not associated with capture of the image, including report."

Questions or Assistance?

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

Notes:

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