

## **Unbundling**

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Unbundling occurs when a provider bills separately for several individual procedures, each with its own CPT code that should be included within one combined CPT code. The most common place to find this misuse of the CPT codes is in the area of laboratory procedures.

For instance, a Basic Metabolic Panel (CPT Code 80048) includes the following individual tests:

Calcium	82310
Carbon Dioxide	82374
Chloride	82345
Creatinine	82565
Glucose	82947
Potassium	84132
Sodium	84295
Urea Nitrogen	84520

If billed out separately, these eight tests would total about **\$210** in the Portland area. If billed out properly under CPT 80048, the cost is about **\$45**. Left undetected, this practice can drive up your claim costs significantly.

Some other laboratory codes that may also be subject to unbundling include: General Health Panel (80050), Electrolyte Panel (80051), Lipid Panel (80061) and Renal Function Panel (80069).

It is also important to review emergency room charges, to be sure that services and supplies that are supposed to be included in the basic emergency room or trauma charge are not billed out separately.