

Casting and Strapping Guidelines

- Casting can be used therapeutically for edema reduction, improving joint mobility or for joint immobilization
 - The codes most applicable for hand therapists/CHTs are:
 - 29065-Application of shoulder to hand (long arm cast) cast
 - 29075-Application of elbow to finger (short arm cast) cast
 - 29085-Application of wrist/hand cast
 - 29086-Application finger cast
- Strapping is the application of adhesive overlapping straps. The main purpose of using a strapping technique is to increase joint stability and reduce the likelihood of an injury (i.e. buddy strapping).
 - The codes most applicable for hand therapists/CHTs are:
 - 29240-Application of shoulder strapping
 - 29260-Application of elbow/wrist strapping
 - 29280-Application of hand/finger strapping
- Taping can be synonymous with strapping; however taping can be used in a specific manner to control and/or guide motion rather than immobilize a body part (i.e. kinesiointaping).

The application of casting and strapping is located in the 29000 code series in the Surgery/Musculoskeletal System section of the CPT manual. Casting and strapping codes are non-time based codes and appropriate documentation is needed when they are used.

The casting and strapping codes should be used when:

- The initial session involves treatment of an injury, fracture, dislocation or to increase patient comfort
- The session follows initial treatment performed by a different practitioner

These codes should not be used when:

- The initial session involves only strapping or casting without therapeutic treatment
- When taping is used for another purpose besides immobilization

Most CPT codes reported by hand therapists/CHTs are located within the 97000 series, but a provider can report any code as long as they are qualified to perform the service represented by that specific code. Taping (i.e. kinesiointaping) can be billed using an applicable CPT 97000 series code, depending on the purpose of the tape application. Some

payers have strict interpretations of the casting and strapping 29000 series codes and may not reimburse for these codes. The best advise to determine if the payer will cover the CPT code you are using is to contact the payer directly prior to applying the cast or strap to determine coverage.

References:

APTA. "FAQ: Orthotics, Prosthetics, Casting, Strapping, and Taping", www.apta.org, January 8, 2013

Nelson, Tanai S.; Benjamin, Christina. "Casting Conundrum: Correct Coding for Casts, Splints, and Strapping " *Journal of AHIMA* 80, no.7 (July 2009): 74-76.