

# Bilateral Procedures

**Origination Date: 10/2015**

**Last Review: 06/25/2024**

**Next Review: 06/2025**

## Description

Bilateral procedures are procedures performed on both sides of the body during the same encounter on the same day on the same member by a single provider or providers in the same group practice. Oscar follows the bilateral procedure CMS standards in the NPFS (National Physician Fee Schedule) for adjustment of payment.

## Policy

Bilateral services must be billed on a single line with modifier -50 appended. Modifier -50 is not applicable to procedures that are bilateral by definition or procedures with descriptions that include such terminology as “bilateral” or “unilateral.” Do not use Modifiers RT and LT when modifier -50 applies.

## Reimbursement Guidelines

Procedures **Eligible** for Bilateral Payment Adjustment:

### Status Indicator 1:

If the procedure is billed with the -50 bilateral modifier, a 150% payment adjustment applies.

### Status Indicator 3:

Services in this category are generally radiology procedures or other diagnostic tests which are not subject to the special payment rules for other bilateral procedures with CMS status indicator 1. If a procedure is reported with modifier -50, payment is based on 100% of the standard reimbursement for each side.

Procedures **Ineligible** for Bilateral Payment Adjustment:

### Status Indicator 2:

Payment for these services is already considered bilateral. If the procedure is submitted with modifier -50 or reported twice, payment is still 100% of the standard reimbursement.

## Billing and Coding

There are multiple codes which encompass Bilateral modifier eligible and ineligible procedures, please see NPFS for coding reference.

## References

1. [CMS Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Ch. 23](#)
2. [CMS National Physician Fee Schedule](#)

## Publication History

Date	Action/Description
10/09/2015	Original Documentation
11/01/2015	Initial Policy Approval
06/25/2024	Policy Reviewed, Updated format and added definition and dating convention. No Changes to intent of policy.