



Coding Policy

Procedure Code 97012, Mechanical Traction/Spinalator

The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) receives numerous requests for clarification on describing the work associated with mechanical traction.

According to CPT, mechanical traction is described as the force used to create a degree of tension of soft tissues and/or to allow for separation between joint surfaces. The degree of traction is controlled through the amount of force (pounds) allowed, duration (time), and angle of pull (degrees) using mechanical means. Terms often used in describing pelvic/cervical traction are intermittent or static (describing the length of time traction is applied), or autotraction (use of the body's own weight to create the force).

A common question is whether roller table type traction meets the above requirement. Roller table type traction normally meets the requirement of autotraction, the use of the body's own weight to create the force.

It is the position of the American Chiropractic Association that modalities such as mechanical traction are not included in the work of the CMT codes. Code 97012 should be used to describe these services, subject to documented medical necessity.