



## Visual Evoked Potential Testing for Pediatric Populations in the Primary Care Setting

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### Definition/Background

Visual evoked potentials (VEPs) are electrophysiologic responses to stimulation by either patterned or unpatterned visual stimuli. Responses evoked by patterned stimuli are "pattern" VEPs or PVEPs. Responses evoked by unpatterned stimuli are "flash" VEPs or FVEPs.

VEP testing consists of electrodes placed on the scalp, over the occipital lobes of the brain, to detect electrical response in the visual cortex in response to visual stimuli.

While VEP testing is utilized primarily as a diagnostic tool for the neurological assessment of the visual system so that specific ophthalmologic or neurologic abnormalities may be identified, its use in the routine office setting has become increasingly more commonplace (though tests such as the Snellen chart and picture optotypes remain the established screening modalities for conditions such as amblyopia, strabismus and defects in visual acuity).

Half-field PVEP testing is more sensitive than full-field testing in detecting lesions of the visual system at chiasmal or postchiasmal sites. Such testing can often clarify the cause of ambiguous findings on full-field testing. Half-field testing may demonstrate visual pathway abnormality in the presence of normal full-field PVEPs, but requires greater patient cooperation and is technically more demanding than full-field testing.

FVEPs are less sensitive than PVEPs to dysfunction of the visual projection pathways. Their use in clinical testing is generally limited to subjects with severe refractive errors or opacity of ocular media who cannot visually resolve a pattern stimulus and subjects who are too young or too uncooperative to reliably fixate on a pattern stimulus. (Pattern VEP testing can be successfully performed on infants and toddlers but may be quite time consuming)

### Guideline

Members are eligible for VEP testing to screen for visual disorders as follows:

1. ≤ 3 years of age.
2. 1-time per year.

### Limitations/Exclusions

Automated VEP screening is not considered medically necessary, as there is insufficient evidence of therapeutic value.

### Applicable Procedures Codes

95930	Visual evoked potential (VEP) testing central nervous system, checkerboard or flash
0333T	Visual evoked potential, screening of visual acuity, automated (Not covered)

### Applicable ICD-10 Diagnosis Codes

Z13.5	Encounter for screening for eye and ear disorders
Z13.858	Encounter for screening for other nervous system disorders
Z13.89	Encounter for screening for other disorder
Z13.9	Encounter for screening, unspecified

### References

Specialty-matched clinical peer review.