

Fleming did mention that he got a picture of the thymus gland with his first image of the heart. Gutierrez assumed the main objective of the first picture was to get a picture of the heart and the thymus happened to be in there. Gutierrez knew that it was important to Dr. Fleming that the thymus gland be in the picture. Dr. Fleming never mentioned anything about breast images.

SA Palmer asked if a physician can bill for an image of the thymus gland. Gutierrez did not know for sure, and briefly looked in her CPT book. She did not see a specific thymus gland code, but said she would need to research it further before giving a proper answer.

SA Palmer asked if a physician could bill for research. Gutierrez explained that she would need to review the Medicare regulations before answering that question. Gutierrez thought that there are certain things that can be billed under clinical trials, but she has not reviewed that in a while.

SA Palmer asked Gutierrez if a physician needed to have all their "multiple studies" be tomographic in order to bill CPT code 78465. Gutierrez said that there was not a code listed for multiple studies if one was planar and one was tomographic, so since 78465 required multiple studies, she thinks that as long as a physician performs multiple studies, he/she can bill CPT 78465. Gutierrez said that Dr. Fleming performed two studies, the first being static and the second being SPECT.

Gutierrez said she has not spoken with other physicians or nuclear technologists about Dr. Fleming's protocol and what CPT code he should have billed. Gutierrez works in an internal medicine practice now, so she is not around cardiologists or nuclear techs.