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**Measure Function... One Step at a Time!**

# GAITRite

## Office Manager's Handbook

of

- Insurance Billing,
- Information Requests,
- Information Responses,
- Public Relations,
- and
- Examiner Accreditation.

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## **Disclaimer**

This manual is intended to provide information about the *GAITRite* system and its billing procedures. While the information solicited, received, and utilized in this publication is believed to be reliable, its accuracy cannot be guaranteed. Although the information used herein represents average billing and reimbursement rates as determined from sampling nationwide, these results should not be construed to perfectly predict the reimbursement behavior of the entire population of providers. Final decisions regarding payment of claims rest with the insurer in accordance with its policies. *CIR* Systems Inc. assumes no responsibility for any errors or omissions that may appear in this manual.

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## **Section 1: Billing for *GAITRite* Tests**

### **1.1 What to include?**

When billing for tests performed with the *GAITRite* System for the first time, it is important to remember that the company or reviewer to whom you are addressing your bill may not be familiar with *GAITRite*. You must therefore provide certain documentation to ensure that the company understands the necessity of the test so that reimbursement will be forthcoming.

We suggest that you do the following:

- A cover letter to the company/reviewer
- The standard insurance form outlining the test description and the charges
- A printout of the test(s) performed

# **\*\*Specimen\*\***

## **GAITRite Objective Gait Analysis Report**

Re:

Date:

Chart:

*“From a functional standpoint, the ability to walk is an important skill that is normally attained at a very early age. When this ability is compromised the result may be the loss of independence or the need for some aid, such as a wheelchair or crutches...treatment of gait disorders is a very common activity for the clinical therapist, particularly in the rehabilitation setting. To determine the nature and extent of a gait abnormality it is essential to undertake an assessment...a subjective written description entered into the notes by the clinician...may be expedient, but it relies heavily on the skill and experience of the assessor and is prone to error and misinterpretation. Studies have demonstrated that subjective gait assessment is unreliable...It is suggested that if distance and timing parameters of gait could be determined objectively then this would provide extremely useful information to the clinician and would augment, rather than replace the observational assessment.”<sup>1</sup>*

The *GAITRite* system is an electronic walkway that connects to a computer, and automates the measurement of temporal (timing) and spatial (distance) gait parameters, such as cadence, step length and velocity. The standard *GAITRite* walkway contains 13824 sensors encapsulated in a roll up carpet to produce an active area 2-feet wide and 12-feet long. The walkway is portable, can be laid over any flat surface and requires no placement of any devices on the patient.

*GAITRite* accurately produces multiple parameters that objectively describe the complex task of walking, which requires a delicate balance, synergy and coordination of the nervous and musculoskeletal systems. It is being used successfully by a diverse group of disciplines that require assessment and documentation of lower extremity function. Such as: clinics, medical facilities, universities and research centers in fall prevention, geriatric, orthopedic, physical therapy and pediatric programs, neurology, prosthetics and orthotics, and in the evaluation of surgical and non-surgical techniques.

The *Concept of Medical Necessity* is the foundation of all reimbursement made under the provisions of s.440.13,FS. Any medical service or supply used to *identify* or *treat injuries* and *work related illness* which is appropriate to the patient’s diagnosis, consistent with the location of service and with the level of care provided, is considered *Medically Necessary*. The service must also be widely accepted by the practicing peer group, based on scientific criteria, and be determined to be reasonably safe. It must not be experimental, investigative, or research nature. The services are either those required for the *remedial treatment* or *diagnosis* of *injuries, work related illness, a pre-existing condition* affected by the injury or illness, or a *complication* resulting from the *injury* or *illness*.

### **Tester Reliability of the *GAITRite* System**

1. This system is a sophisticated device, which is, in essence, an “electronic footprint analyzer”.
2. The certified technician performing these assessments has basic training and is inherently qualified to process the aforementioned footprints.
3. The inherently qualified tester has reviewed the *GAITRite* instruction manual and has successfully demonstrated competency in the *GAITRite* proficiency exam.

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<sup>1</sup> James C. Wall, Ph.D., Denis Brunt, PT, Ed.D. Chapter 17, Clinical Gait Analysis: Temporal and Distance Parameters. Assessment in Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy edited by J.V. Van Deusen, 1996

## 1.2 What CPT / ICD-9 Codes to Use?

There are several codes are applicable to GAITRite, they are:

2001 conversion factor = \$38.2581

97750 Physical Performance Test (.70) = 26.78067

97520 Prosthetic Training (.64) = 24.485184

97116 Gait Training (.56) = 21.424536

97505 Orthotic Training (.60) = 22.95486

97110 Therapeutic Exercise (.66) = 25.250346

The above charges are for each 15 minutes of therapy. The specific relative value unit (RVU) and geographic price cost indices (GPCI) vary according to geographic location.

RVU (work) x GPCI = Work RVU

+

RVU (practice) x GPCI = Practice RVU

+

RVU (malpractice) x GPCI = Malpractice RVU

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Total RVU

Total RVU x Conversion Factor = Medicare Allowable Amount in Dollars \*

\* Keep in mind that Medicare reimburses for 80% of the fee schedule amount

Example for code 97750 for Metropolitan Philadelphia:

.45 x 1.024 = 0.4608

.23 x 1.089 = 0.25047

.02 x 1.207 = 0.02414

Total RVU = 0.73541

0.73541 x 38.2581 = \$28.14

### **1.3 How Often Can I Bill?**

Various reviews from different insurers in different states suggest that each test may be reimbursed once per 30-day period per patient.

If a patient is re-injured, or for some other reason other than a routine follow-up evaluation requiring a *GAITRite* test within 30-days, then a *reasonable explanation for the reason for the evaluation* will be needed to facilitate reimbursement.

### **1.4 How much do I Charge?**

If you are using *GAITRite* for one or more reasons for a patient, then these are listed separately on the bill and the sum total is billed. (See 1.2 for codes and charges)

However, in most states, individual insurers have underwritten ceilings on what can be billed for an office evaluation per visit, even if it involves several objective instrumented tests. It is in your interest, then, to recognize this ceiling and to bill accordingly.

In most instances, *GAITRite* will be used quite often, even daily with each patient. Billing for a physical performance test at the beginning and end of care is reasonable, in addition to using one or more other codes during the treatment program. *GAITRite* is extremely useful for documenting treatment efficacy, therefore printouts should be attached to each bill or should be made available to the carrier to justify reimbursement for both the *GAITRite* evaluation/training, in addition to the treatment rendered.

## **Section 2: Responses to requests for *GAITRite* Information**

Insurance companies will usually request information on the *GAITRite* once you have filed a claim. Supplying the third party insurer with a cover letter with your bill, explaining what *GAITRite* does and its benefits will minimize these requests. However, in certain instances, additional information may be required.

It is also important in these cases to document that *GAITRite* is by no means an investigative tool and that both its accuracy and reliability have been proven in the scientific literature.

You can also include a letter to the claims reviewer of that particular insurance carrier explaining what *GAITRite* measures, the importance of truly objective clinical testing in both the evaluation of the problem, and in quantifying treatment results as they relate to the patient's function.

A standard sample letter is provided for your use in such circumstances and is found on the following page.

# **\*\*Specimen\*\***

Date:

ABC Insurance  
123 State Street  
Your City, USA 12345

Attention: Senior Claims Reviewer

Dear Sir or Madam:

## **Re: *GAITRite* System Analysis**

Numerous meetings and discussions between our State and National Medical Associations, in addition to insurance carriers and managed care organizations have resulted in a common conclusion. That is, today, documentation, treatment efficacy and cost effectiveness are the watchwords in regards to the control of reimbursement for the entire healthcare system.

Clinics such as ours have been challenged to provide sufficient documentation to justify what we are doing for patients and for how long we plan/need to treat them. The *GAITRite* System provides the most basic information applicable to our patient's function as any system available today. In fact, if a person is not confined to a wheelchair, walking, with or without an assistive device is essential for an individual to function in our society. The *GAITRite* measures a patient's walking function, such as their cadence, velocity, and step length objectively, thus reducing the ambiguity of subjective gait analysis that takes place daily in the clinical setting.

The accuracy and reliability of the *GAITRite* has been successfully documented in the scientific literature and is currently in use in numerous multidisciplinary teaching institutions throughout the world.

The *GAITRite* System is a sophisticated device, which is, in essence, an "electronic footprint analyzer". The problem with visual or subjective gait assessment is best described by a quote from a chapter written by Dr. James Wall and Dr. Denis Brunt in the book entitled *Assessment in Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy*. "*There is a defined need for objective measurement of gait because without it the quality of treatment decisions is reduced because of the subjective and often unreliable nature of the assessment. Objective measures must also be employed if one is to demonstrate the efficacy of a treatment protocol, a function that will become increasingly important as health care resources become more strained and health care providers are held more accountable...Gait assessment is an everyday responsibility for the practicing therapist. Visual assessment, which is almost universally used for this purpose, has been shown to be unreliable at best. Measurement of the temporal and distance factors of gait have been found to be clinically useful.*"

With the *GAITRite* system, we can objectively document the temporal and spatial parameters of gait, thereby quantifying treatment efficacy as it relates to function as opposed to impairment.

Finally, with *GAITRite*, we believe that we can offer you the most appropriate and objective documentation of patient need for treatment, as well as tracking their progress up to their discharge from our care. We would be happy to explain any of the *GAITRite* results for the attached patient(s) at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Office Manager

Clinic XYZ

## 2.2 Referring Doctors

The advantages that you can provide by utilizing the *GAITRite* for a referring doctor include:

- Objective gait assessment of a patient
- Over 18 gait parameters measured for baseline documentation and progress reports
- Results compared to norms, where they exist

*GAITRite* is ideal for:

- Establishing baseline walking function
- Documenting gait patterns prior to any intervention
- Measuring functional ambulation immediately after treatment
- Documenting that intervention did or did not have a carry-over effect
- Matching objective gait parameters with subjective findings
- Satisfying a patient's desire to understand his/her problem
- Refining proper alignment and fit for prosthetics and orthotics
- Selecting the appropriate assistive device
- Replying to an Independent Medical Examiner
- Directing treatment for the patient with a bewildering problem

A letter, which you may consider sending to solicit referrals or to respond to a doctor's request for information, is shown on the following page.

# **\*\*Specimen\*\***

Date

Dear Dr:

## **Re: New Gait Analysis Capability**

You can now have a completely objective, temporospatial gait analysis, performed on your patients during a brief evaluation at our facility. With *GAITRite*, we will evaluate your patient's walking function as it relates to a variety of musculoskeletal and neurological problems or to an injury/illness.

The testing with *GAITRite* is completely non-invasive and the patient is non-encumbered. The reports are fully documented with pictorial, tabular and narrative printouts. *GAITRite* is ideal for:

- Establishing baseline walking function
- Documenting gait patterns prior to any intervention
- Matching objective gait parameters with subjective findings
- Satisfying a patient's desire to understand his/her problem
- Refining proper alignment and fit for prosthetics and orthotics
- Selecting the appropriate assistive device
- Replying to an Independent Medical Examiner
- Directing treatment for the patient with a bewildering problem

I have attached a brief information sheet on the *GAITRite* Portable Walkway System for your review.

Please call me to schedule your patients for evaluations.

Sincerely,

Clinician

Enclosures: *GAITRite* information sheet

## **2.3 Insurance Adjuster, Attorney or other medicolegal personnel**

Information requests from the medicolegal perspective will, in most instances, revolve around the questions of accuracy, reliability, and acceptance by regulatory bodies and state courts as to its applicability in any given case.

Any letters addressed to persons requiring this type of information should include the fact that *GAITRite* is a safe, non-invasive, non-encumbering method for measuring a person's walking function. *GAITRite* accurately produces multiple parameters that objectively describe the complex task of walking, which requires a delicate balance, synergy and coordination of the nervous and musculoskeletal systems.

The *GAITRite* system is an electronic walkway that connects to a computer, and automates the measurement of temporal (timing) and spatial (distance) gait parameters, such as cadence, step length and velocity. The standard *GAITRite* walkway contains 13824 sensors encapsulated in a roll up carpet to produce an active area 2-feet wide and 12-feet long. The walkway is portable, can be laid over any flat surface and requires no placement of any devices on the patient. *GAITRite* uses no radiation, electricity or ultrasound to measure these parameters and is therefore a safe method for evaluating walking function, even during pregnancy.

*CIR Systems Inc.*, the manufacturer of *GAITRite*, has implemented a certification program to ensure quality control amongst its clients. The certified technician performing these assessments has basic training and is inherently qualified to process the "electronic footprints" displayed on the *GAITRite* System. The inherently qualified tester has reviewed the *GAITRite* instruction manual and has successfully demonstrated competency in the *GAITRite* proficiency exam.

It is being used successfully by a diverse group of disciplines that require assessment and documentation of lower extremity function. Such as: clinics, medical facilities, universities and research centers in fall prevention, geriatric, orthopedic, physical therapy and pediatric programs, neurology, prosthetics and orthotics, and in the evaluation of surgical and non-surgical techniques.

## Section 3: Public Relations / Marketing Information

### 3.1 Patient Information

The *GAITRite* system is an electronic walkway that connects to a computer, and automates the measurement of temporal (timing) and spatial (distance) gait parameters, such as cadence, step length and velocity. The standard *GAITRite* walkway contains 13824 sensors encapsulated in a roll up carpet to produce an active area 2-feet wide and 12-feet long. The walkway is portable, can be laid over any flat surface and requires no placement of any devices on the patient. *GAITRite* uses no radiation, electricity or ultrasound to measure these parameters and is therefore a safe method for evaluating walking function, even during pregnancy.

*GAITRite* can be used to objectively evaluate and follow-up on patients in the following areas:

- Orthopedics
- Pediatrics
- Neurology
- Geriatrics
- Fall Prevention
- Stroke Rehabilitation
- Prosthetics & Orthotics

*GAITRite* allows for better targeting and individualizing of treatment plans and helps evaluate the patient's progress. This concept of a thorough initial consultation/evaluation with subsequent, periodic follow-up exams, parallels exercise and weight loss programs as they can monitor minute changes and make any modifications when necessary.

Since *GAITRite* measures in a non-invasive and non-obtrusive fashion, it is completely safe for use with both pediatric and adult populations.

### 3.2 A Sample of Information to Industrial Clients

To cater to the special requirements of potential industrial clients, we suggest that your letter be in a format similar to the following:

With the ever-increasing importance of objective documentation for screening and evaluation, clinics are faced with the responsibility of providing the patients, insurance companies, and/or employers alike with the most accurate, objective and complete information possible. In this light, we are pleased to announce that we have recently added the *GAITRite* System to our evaluation capabilities.

The *GAITRite* system is an electronic walkway that connects to a computer, and automates the measurement of temporal (timing) and spatial (distance) gait parameters, such as cadence, step length and velocity. The standard *GAITRite* walkway contains 13824 sensors encapsulated in a roll up carpet to produce an active area 2-feet wide and 12-feet long. The walkway is portable, can be laid over any flat surface and requires no placement of any devices on the patient.

With *GAITRite*, we will evaluate your patient's walking function as it relates to a variety of musculoskeletal and neurological problems or to an injury/illness. You can now have a completely objective, temporospatial gait analysis, performed on your patients during a brief evaluation either at your facility or ours. *GAITRite* results can be used for:

- Establishing baseline walking function
- Documenting gait patterns prior to any intervention
- Matching objective gait parameters with subjective findings
- Replying to an Independent Medical Examiner

The testing with *GAITRite* is completely non-invasive and the patient is non-encumbered. The reports are fully documented with pictorial, tabular and narrative printouts. This information immediately lets all parties involved actually see the problem compared to the population norms and therefore better evaluate the amount of disability or dysfunction.

Enclosed are some sample printouts for your perusal. Please do not hesitate to contact our office should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

### 3.3 Attending Health Fairs

A tremendous asset of the *GAITRite* System is its portability. Just roll it up and take it with you to a local health fair or a community service function. Since *GAITRite* measures in a non-invasive and non-obtrusive fashion, it is unquestionably safe for use with both pediatric and adult populations, even during pregnancy. The walkway can be laid over any flat surface and the patient is completely unencumbered. Who isn't curious about the way they walk?

The ability to identify numerous temporospatial gait deviations quickly and easily makes *GAITRite* a natural to be used at a health fair. Connecting your computer to a large computer monitor, or better yet, to a large TV (by using a scan converter) will attract a crowd. This high-tech "footprint analyzer" is inherently fascinating to the general public. All these factors generally result in large crowds of people lining up for "Complimentary Computerized Gait Analysis Evaluations" on the *GAITRite*.

Using *GAITRite* along with a few simple tips can help to greatly enhance any clinic's image and patient referrals.

1. Have a visible sign for people to see such as: "Free Computerized Gait Analysis".
2. Set up with a table with appropriate literature about your specialty and your office.
3. Set up the *GAITRite* perpendicular to the computer and monitor. Face the boxes away from the crowd. Make sure that the monitor is raised up enough so that it is visible from afar.
4. Be sure to have at least 2 people in the booth, preferably 3, as the people will be lined up all day waiting for their "gait analysis".
5. Have an appointment book available for immediate scheduling of patients.
6. Get the names and addresses of all the people that walk over the *GAITRite*.
7. Emphasize that by using technology like *GAITRite*, you'll be able to establish their baseline walking function from which to objectively compare their future performance.
8. Follow up by sending a thank you note to each person analyzed. Include a promotional flyer about you and your facility for them to share with their family physician, their family, and/or their friends.

*GAITRite* will draw a crowd. Many people will ask to be analyzed. It's your job to then sell yourself and your facility.

It works!

### 3.4 Holding an Open House

Many offices and clinics prefer to invite a number of local referring doctors, attorneys, and/or insurance company representatives or employers to an open house.

This gives the professionals of your area a chance to examine and to ask questions about the services being offered at your clinic. It also gives you a chance to establish contact with the different people you may have to deal with on a referral, reimbursement, or medicolegal level.

## **Section 5: Examiner Accreditation**

### **5.1 Accreditation Requirements**

The *GAITRite* produces highly accurate and reliable data regardless of the examiner. There are however, certain techniques that should be employed to ensure consistency in testing protocol and proficiency in data processing and analysis.

In order to establish the proficiency of *GAITRite* examiners, *CIR* Systems has instituted an Examiner Accreditation where each examiner's ability to process a series of walk files is evaluated for accuracy. The successful examiner is awarded an accreditation certificate as shown on the following page, certifying them as an accredited *GAITRite* Examiner for a period of one (1) year. The requirements for this accreditation are as follows:

Each examiner must successfully answer a series of questions pursuant to setup and data collection procedures. In addition, they must correctly analyze several walk files that will challenge their knowledge of the *GAITRite* software, including choosing the proper algorithm for a particular walk as well as using manual footfall identification.

The results of the aforementioned information will be scored and analyzed by *CIR* Systems, Inc.