<table>
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<th>Hospital Quality Measures</th>
<th>What Is This?</th>
<th>Why Is It Important?</th>
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| Outpatients with low-back pain who had an MRI without trying recommended treatments first (such as physical therapy) | • An MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) is a test that uses a powerful magnetic field, with no radiation risk, and a computer to produce detailed pictures of the inside of the body (such as the bones, organs, and other body parts).  
• Standards of care say that most patients with low-back pain should start with treatment, like physical therapy or chiropractic care, and have an MRI only if the treatment does not help.  
• Lower Percentages are Better. | |
| Outpatient CT scans of the abdomen that were “combination” (double) scans | • A CT scan (also known as a CAT scan) uses multiple X-rays to produce detailed pictures of the inside of the body (such as the bones, organs, and other body parts).  
• “Combination” CT scan means that the patient gets 2 CT scans: one scan without contrast, followed by a second scan with contrast. Contrast is a substance consumed by the patient prior to the scan for body parts to stand out more clearly.  
• Standards of quality care say that most patients who are getting a CT scan of the chest or abdomen should be given a single CT scan (either one with contrast or one without contrast), rather than a “combination” CT scan.  
• Lower Percentages are Better. | |
| Outpatient CT scans of the chest that were “combination” (double) scans | • A cardiac stress test measures the heart’s ability to respond when it is working hard, and can be useful in evaluating a patient's surgical risk.  
• This includes the percentage of all cardiac stress tests done in a hospital outpatient imaging department for Medicare patients (using echocardiograms, CT scans, and MRIs) who were having certain low-risk outpatient surgical procedures.  
• Lower Percentages are Better. | |
| Outpatients who got cardiac imaging stress tests before low-risk outpatient surgery | • Brain and sinus CT scans can be important tools for diagnosing problems that may be causing severe headaches or chronic sinus infections; however, they also expose patients to high levels of radiation.  
• It is recommended that only patients with head injuries or tumors get both a brain and sinus CT scan at the same time.  
• Lower Percentages are Better. | |
| Outpatients with brain CT scans who got a sinus CT scan at the same time | • A screening mammogram is an X-ray of the breast to check for possible breast cancer before it can be detected by patients or health care professionals.  
• There are many reasons for differences in follow-up rates, including poor technique (blurry X-rays that need to be repeated), medical history of the patient undergoing screening, a lack of skill or experience in interpreting the screening mammograms, and whether he/she is being screened for the first time or has previously had a mammography screening.  
• Hospitals that are rated well on this measure have a percentage of about 9%. Scores above 14% may mean a facility is doing unnecessary follow-up, while percentages near 0% may mean a hospital is missing cancer signs. | |