

Dermatology Coding Alert

Catch More Copays With These Tips

Many surgical practices have signs that read "Payment is expected at time of service," but as your practice has probably found, it's not an easy policy to enforce. So follow these five easy precautions to make sure you get your copayments on site and on time.

- 1) **Verify patients' insurance coverage** when scheduling appointments.
- 2) **Talk to patients before their appointments** about their financial responsibility for copayments, deductibles and noncovered services.
- 3) **Give patients an up-front estimate** of what they will owe.
- 4) **Ask for payment of copayments and deductibles** when patients register for their appointments.
- 5) **Offer flexible payment options**, like credit cards or extended payment plans.

Extra: Some payers suggest that you keep a simple flow chart or spreadsheet at the front desk that lists all insurance companies your practice contracts with and other relevant information for each company, including copays. If you have a chart in your dermatology practice, make sure it is made well known to all front-desk staff and kept in an easily accessible spot for your patients and staff.