

Dermatology Coding Alert

Correction: Debridement

In "3 Tips Help You Recover Your Full Debridement Pay: Maximize 11040-11044 pay with modifier -51" in the June 2004 issue of Dermatology Coding Alert, the case example in the subsection titled "Look for wound repair with debridement" stated: "You should report this scenario using codes 11640 and 11040 also with modifier -51 (Multiple procedures)."

The article should have stated, "In the case in which the dermatologist excises a lesion, debridement is included in the procedure. However, when the dermatologist only performs debridement or performs the debridement in addition to the wound repair, such as the case when a wound is excessively dirty or contaminated with debris, you would also code the debridement code with the wound repair/excision code, appending modifier -51 (Multiple procedures) for the multiple procedure. For example, a patient returns to the dermatologist several days after a chemical peel to her forehead, cheeks and chin. The areas on her chin are weeping a purulent material, and the wound is infected. The dermatologist debrides the infected areas of her chin and applies an antibiotic ointment."