

Dermatology Coding Alert

Reader Question: Consider Coding Chemocauterization

Question: A patient came in for wart removal on his right second toe. The physician performed a sharp debridement that was followed by application of a concentrated salicylic acid paste. I have been told I have to bill this and an E/M code because the paste is part of a serial treatment. But another DPM says it qualifies as a chemocauterization. How do I code this?

California Subscriber

Answer: Code 17110 (Destruction [e.g., laser surgery, electrosurgery, cryosurgery, chemosurgery, surgical curettement], of benign lesions other than skin tags or cutaneous vascular proliferative lesions: up to 14 lesions) includes debridement of the lesion as well as chemocauterization of the lesion .

You would report 17110 for up to 14 lesions. If treating 15 or more lesions, you would report 17111 (...15 or more lesions).