Dermatology Coding Alert

Reader Question: Location Gives You the Correct Excision Code

Question: The dermatologist excised and fulgurated a lesion that measured 0.1 cm. He then sent the excised lesion to the lab for biopsy. How should I code a lesion excision this small?

New York Subscriber

Answer: In this case, you should report 11600 (Excision, malignant lesion including margins, trunk, arms, or legs; excised diameter 0.5 cm or less) depending on the location of the lesion. If the dermatologist removes the lesion from the scalp, neck, hands, feet, or genitalia, you should report 11620 (Excision, malignant lesion including margins, scalp, neck, hands, feet, genitalia; excised diameter 0.5 cm or less).

If the dermatologist removes a lesion from the face, ears, eyelids, nose, or lips, you should report 11640 (Excision, malignant lesion including margins, face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips; excised diameter 0.5 cm or less).