# Dermatology Coding Alert

## Reader Question: "No Charge" Visits Still Count Toward Established Patient Status

**Question:** Our dermatologist saw a patient during a quick assessment last year at no charge. The patient returned this week for a complete exam. Should this be billed as an established patient or new?Codify Subscriber

**Answer:** In this situation, the patient will be considered "established" because you already treated him during a face-to-face encounter within the last three years, which constitutes an established patient under the CPT® guidelines.