

## **Dermatology Coding Alert**

### **Reader Question: To Sum Excisions or Not? That Is the Question**

Question: Would you please explain adding excision sizes together? If the dermatologist excises a lesion, (malignant or not), should I add the sizes together?

Maryland Subscriber

Answer: You should never add lesion excisions together. You should code excisions (11400-11646) according to the specific site, times the number of excisions the dermatologist performed. For example, you would report 11400 (Excision, benign lesion including margins, except skin tag [unless listed elsewhere], trunk, arms or legs; excised diameter 0.5 cm or less) on the CMS-1500 if the dermatologist removed four lesions.

You may be thinking of repairs, in which case you should add the total of the lengths of the wounds or lacerations repaired together in each type of repair category -- simple, intermediate and complex (12001-13160) -- according to the body area and location of the wounds or lacerations.