

Dermatology Coding Alert

Reader Questions: Base Tissue Adhesive Code Selection on Payer Preference

Question: If our dermatologist used a tissue adhesive instead of placing a suture, can this procedure be reported using laceration repair codes (such as 12001), or should I report HCPCS code G0168?

New York Subscriber

Answer: Depending on the payer, you have two code choices: 12001 (Simple repair of superficial wounds of scalp, neck, axillae, external genitalia, trunk and/or extremities [including hands and feet]; 2.5 cm or less) or G0168 (Wound closure utilizing tissue adhesive[s] only).

You can use repair codes from the CPT® range 12001-13160 when your dermatologist performs wound closure using sutures, staples, or tissue adhesives. So, it is not necessary that you will have to restrict usage of repair codes only when your clinician used a suture for laceration repair.

Unless a payer, such as Medicare, is specific about using the HCPCS code, most payers will look for the CPT® repair codes when your clinician performs laceration repair