

Dermatology Coding Alert

Reader Questions: Distinguish Between 15825 or 15828 for Rhytidectomy

Question: The dermatologist in our practice removed excess skin from a patient's neck. Is this a billable procedure? If so, how should I report it?

Montana Subscriber

Answer: Yes, this is a billable procedure, but payment may be another issue. The procedure you describe is referred to as rhytidectomy or the "elimination of wrinkles from, or reshaping of, the face, by excising any excess skin and tightening the remainder," according to Stedman's Concise Medical Dictionary.

You should code this procedure using 15825 (Rhytidectomy: neck with platysmal tightening) if the dermatologist also completed platysmal tightening. If the dermatologist did not complete platysmal tightening, you should report 15828 (Rhytidectomy; cheek, chin and neck), and append modifier 52 for reduced services.