

Dermatology Coding Alert

Reader Questions: Keloid Scar Removal Most Likely Means 17110

Question: Is removal of a keloid scar considered an unlisted procedure? What is the right code?

Missouri Subscriber

Answer: First, determine the way the dermatologist treated the keloid. Occasionally, the scar may be excised, or it may be simply treated with an intralesional injection. For excision, use 17110 (Destruction [e.g., laser surgery, electrosurgery, cryosurgery, chemosurgery, surgical curettement], of benign lesions other than skin tags or cutaneous vascular proliferative lesions; up to 14 lesions) with diagnosis 701.4 (Keloid scar). Codes 17110 and 17111 (... 15 or more lesions) are now used for destruction of common or plantar warts.

Rewind: In 2007, these codes were revised to include destruction of benign lesions other than skin tags or cutaneous vascular lesions.

Other way: Confirm how your physician removes the keloid and base your reporting on this. More importantly, you should want to note his method of destruction or excision.

Red flag: Do not resort to reporting the procedure as 17999 (Unlisted procedure, skin, mucous membrane and subcutaneous tissue) as there are other CPT codes that define it more clearly.