

Dermatology Coding Alert

Reader Questions: You Can Ignore Modifier Indicator '9'

Question: What does the "9" in the modifier indicator column of the National Correct Coding Initiative edits mean?

Illinois Subscriber

Answer: The official explanation from Medicare is that "a 9 means that the use of modifiers is not specified." This indicator also marks all of the bundled pairs for which the deletion date is the same as the effective date -- bundles that were, essentially, never effective.

NCCI created this indicator so that there would be no blank spaces in the indicator field. Generally, bundles marked with "9" are bundles you don't have to worry about because they were never effective NCCI bundles.