

## Dermatology Coding Alert

### Ward Off Wound Care Coding Denials With 15340

#### Learn which common dermatology products line up with new skin graft codes

Hot on the heels of newly emerging skin graft technology, CPT made a bold move that expanded your coding choices and opened the door for more dermatology materials to move to acellular xenograft status.

CPT increased its skin graft options from 21 to 54 codes under the new category "Skin Replacement Surgery and Skin Substitutes."

Here are four key additions:

- 15340--Tissue cultured allogeneic skin substitute; first 25 sq cm or less
- +15341--... each additional 25 sq cm
- 15430--Acellular xenograft implant; first 100 sq cm or less, or one percent of body area of infants and children
- +15431--... each additional 100 sq cm, or each additional one percent of body area of infants and children, or part thereof.

Codes 15340-15341 replaced the old codes for skin substitutes 15342-15343 (Application of bilaminar skin substitute/neodermis ...). You should be using the new codes to report grafts with products like Apligraf or Dermagraft.

**Tricky:** The addition of 15430 raises the question whether an acellular collagen matrix, such as Oasis, falls into the acellular xenograft category. In the past, Medicare carriers have hammered home that this product should be considered a "wound care dressing," not a xenograft.

**Rest assured:** While Medicare has not yet published an official determination on the status of products like Oasis with CPT 2006, several experts have confirmed that they will advance to acellular xenograft status with the addition of 15430. "It is appropriate for use with acellular xenograft products, including Oasis," says **Kitty Vineyard, MA**, director of the American Burn Association in Chicago.

**Learn more:** For more information about the new skin graft codes, read "Get Ready: Next Year's Manual Shows a Lot More Skin--Skin Grafts, That Is" in the November 2005 Dermatology Coding Alert.