

Dermatology Coding Alert

You Be the Coder: Wart Removal Without Cryo

Question: The dermatologist documented, "Dermatology treatment rendered in the form of debridement with #11 blade" for a patient presenting with a plantar wart. He did not use cryotherapy. Should we consider the removal part of the E/M service, or is there a CPT code to describe the procedure?

Louisiana Subscriber

Answer: The procedure appears to fall under code 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). The descriptor includes surgical curettement, which is what your physician probably completed during debridement. Note that 17110 includes removal of up to 14 warts or other benign lesions. If the physician removes more lesions, you would report 17111 (... 15 or more lesions) instead. If you have any questions regarding whether the physician destroyed the wart versus completing another procedure such as shaving (codes 11300-11313, Shaving of epidermal or dermal lesion, single lesion ...), don't hesitate to ask for clarification.