

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

CCI Edits Include Change for Lesion Removal

The Correct Coding Initiative (CCI) version 9.0 was recently released, and internists who remove lesions may find one change worth noting.

In this new version, which took effect Jan. 1, CCI bundles the codes for intermediate and complex repair (12031-13160) with the codes for excision of benign lesions of 0.5 cm or less (11400, 11420 and 11440). CCI cites "misuse of code combination" as the reason for the change. This may be because CMS believes that physicians shouldn't need to perform an intermediate or complex repair on a lesion smaller than 0.5 cm, says **Kathy Pride, CPC, CCS-P**, HIM applications specialist with QuadraMed, based in San Rafael, Calif. A simple repair is included in the excision of a benign lesion, she says.

Few of the other edits in this version apply to internists. CCI releases edits quarterly to indicate codes that should not be used together.

Note: CCI edits are available by subscription from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) at (800) 363-2068.