

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Question: Allergic Reaction of Unknown Cause

Question: We recently treated a patient for an allergic reaction, and the doctor did not know the cause of the allergic reaction. Which diagnosis code should we use?

Florida Subscriber

Answer: To find the code, use the index of the ICD-9 manual to look up the key term "reaction," then the subterm "allergic." You will be led to code 995.3 (Allergy, unspecified). Use additional codes as appropriate to describe any symptoms present, such as 782.1 (Rash and other nonspecific skin eruption), 708.9 (Urticaria, unspecified) and 698.9 (Unspecified pruritic disorder).