

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Question: Confirm Atrophy Before Assigning 728.2 as Dx Code

Question: A three-month old was diagnosed with decreased strength and motion in her left arm. What would be the best diagnosis code?

Maine Subscriber

Answer: Before assigning a code, check with the physician to confirm whether the child is experiencing either a failure to thrive (i.e. grow and gain weight) or muscle waste. For slow growth, choose either 783.41 (Lack of expected normal physiological development in childhood; Failure to thrive) or 779.34 (Failure to thrive in newborn). In this context, a newborn is 28 days old or younger; a child is over 28 days old. For muscular atrophy, report 728.2 (Muscular wasting and disuse atrophy, not elsewhere classified).