Internal Medicine Coding Alert

READER QUESTION: Include Wound VAC Treatment in E/M

Question: Which code should we report if the physician uses a vacuum device to clean out a patient's wound?

Louisiana Subscriber

Answer: The Wound Vacuum Assisted Closure (VAC) device consists of an evacuation tube embedded in a polyurethane foam dressing. The device helps wound closure and keeps infection away from the skin.

If your physician uses this product, he should include his wound care services in his E/M visit (99211-99215 for established patient office visits) for that day, because payers won't allow you to report debridement codes (11040-11044) if you simply use a Wound VAC device.