

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Question: Reduced Price for -52

Question: When using modifier -52, should I reduce the price of the service that I am billing? For example, when we give a Demerol injection, we sometimes don't give the full 100 mg included in J2175. When that happens, we reduce the price accordingly and also use modifier -52. Is it necessary to do both?

Florida Subscriber

Answer: No, you should not reduce your price. Let the payer do that for you. You should use J2175 (Injection, meperidine HCl, per 100 mg) at your full price, appended by modifier -52 (Reduced services).

Modifier -52 tells the payer that you performed a particular service as described in the code but that the physician eliminated some portion of it. "This provides a way of reporting reduced services without disturbing the identification of the basic service," according to CPT.

When you submit your claim with -52, the payer will assume that the price submitted is your full price and will reduce it. If you submit the claim at an already-reduced price, you will be costing your office money because the payer will likely reduce it even more.