

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

READER QUESTIONS: Check Payer Policy Before Reporting Bandage Wrap as Strapping

Question: A patient reports with a swollen right index finger that she injured while catching a basketball awkwardly. The internist performed an x-ray (two views; results negative), then wrapped the finger in a 3-inch-wide ACE bandage. Can we report the bandage supply in addition to the CPT procedure codes?

Nevada Subscriber

Answer: Yes, you can report the ACE bandage supply; you should also make sure your payer considers this a strapping procedure before filing.

Remember: To some payers, wrapping a digit with an ACE bandage does not constitute strapping. These payers will want to see the proper-level evaluation and management code for the service rather than the strapping code.

If you are unsure of your payer's policy on strapping claims, contact a representative before filing this claim. If your payer considers ACE bandage wrapping to be strapping, you should:

- report 73120 (Radiologic examination, hand; two views) for the x-ray.
- report 29280 (Strapping; hand or finger) for the strapping.
- report A6449 (Light compression bandage, elastic, knitted/woven, width greater than or equal to 3 inches and less than 5 inches, per yard) for the bandage supply.
- attach 842.10 (Sprains and strains of hand; unspecified site) to 73120, 29280 and A6448 to represent the patient's injury.
- attach E917.0 (Striking against or struck accidentally by objects or persons; in sports without subsequent fall) to 73120, 29280 and A6448 to represent the cause of the patient's injury.