

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

READER QUESTIONS : :Foot FBRs Differ From Soft-Tissue FBRs

Question: Our physician performed a foreign-body removal (FBR) on a patient with a splinter in the subcutaneous tissues of his left foot. We reported 10120 and received a denial. Should I appeal, or did I code improperly?

North Dakota Subscriber

Answer: In this case, there is a more specific code for a foot FBR. Code 10120 (Incision and removal of foreign body, subcutaneous tissues; simple) is in the Integumentary part of CPTs Surgery section. It is for simple, subcutaneous incision and removal of foreign bodies when no more specific code exists.

For reporting subcutaneous FBRs from the foot, a more specific code does exist.

When your physician removes a foreign body from a patients foot, choose from:

" 28190 -- Removal of foreign body, foot; subcutaneous

" 28192 -- ... deep

" 28193 -- ... complicated.

-- Answers to You Be the Coder and Reader Questions were reviewed by **Bruce Rappoport, MD, CPC, CHCC**, a board-certified internist and medical director of Broward Health's Best Choice Plus and Total Claims Administration in Fort Lauderdale, Fla