

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Questions: Keep an Eye on Medical Necessity

Question: Can I bill for an office visit to discuss a patient's normal lab results? If I can, how should I code it?

Illinois Subscriber

Answer: Probably not. Generally speaking, most physicians will give patients normal results over the phone. Remember that all medical care must meet medical-necessity requirements for Medicare or insurance companies to pay for it. Justifying medical necessity for an office visit to give normal results would be difficult, so your payer probably won't pay for this service, nor would it allow you to bill your patient for the visit. An appropriate diagnosis for this visit would be V65.49 (Counseling without complaint or sickness).