

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Questions: Use V Code for Pap-Only Visit

Question: A patient came in for a well-woman visit, but the physician could not perform a Pap smear on her because she was menstruating. Two weeks later, she came back for a Pap-only visit. How should I code for this visit?

California Subscriber

Answer: HCPCS code Q0091 is for the collection, preparation and conveyance of a Pap smear. Medicare and some commercial carriers recognize this code, which is the appropriate code to use when billing to Medicare. According to CPT Assistant July 1996, if the physician performs a comprehensive history and examination, you should report the age-appropriate code from the preventive medicine series (99381-99397). If the physician performs a brief, detailed, or extended history and examination, report the appropriate-level office or other outpatient E/M visit code (99201-99215).