

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Tip of the Month: Here's How to Develop a Surefire IM Coding Cheat Sheet

2 easy steps are all you need

Before you create a coding "cheat sheet" for your IM office, you should be certain your sheet saves you time and ensures accurate coding. Use this quick tip to set up your sheet today.

Where to start: Use your billing system to develop a report that shows which CPT and ICD-9 codes your office reported the most, says **Molly Hartshorn, MSHP, CMPE**, the regional administrator for Vaccine Healthcare Center in San Antonio. Then, you should set up your cheat sheet to mirror your findings.

Tip: You should consider how often you use a code in your office to decide which codes to list on your sheet, Hartshorn says.

For example, suppose your office bills out 7,000 services a year. After you run your billing report, you find you've reported 90782 (Therapeutic, prophylactic or diagnostic injection [specify material injected]; subcutaneous or intramuscular) 42 times in a year. So, you put 90782 on your cheat sheet.

When you see you've billed 71010 (Radiologic examination, chest; single view, frontal) only eight times, you leave this code off your sheet.

For more on cheat sheets, see our handy sample in this issue.