

Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

Reader Questions: Check Fee Schedule for Punctal Plug Global Period

Question: What is the postoperative period for punctal plug insertion? I am planning to insert permanent plugs after a trial of the collagen plugs and want to make sure that I do not run into a billing problem with Medicare.

Washington Subscriber

Answer: There is a 10-day post-op period for punctal plug insertion. Any visits during the post-op period that are related to the punctal plugs will not be billable to Medicare. Other carriers- policies will vary, but most will follow Medicare's lead.

Tip: You can check global periods by searching the physician [fee schedule](#) online at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/pfslookup/>.

Example: Search for 2008, single HCPC and payment policy indicators. Search for 68761 (Closure of the lacrimal punctum; by plug, each) and choose "All Modifiers." On the next page, you'll see a chart with a column labeled "Global." Under that is "010." That means that 68761 does have a 10-day global period.