

Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

You Be the Expert: Coding Conjunctival/Corneal FBR Scenarios

Question: An established patient complaining of pain and vision trouble in her left eye reports to the optometrist. After performing an expanded history, a problem-focused exam, and medical decision-making (MDM) of low complexity, the optometrist finds a superficial foreign body (FB) in the patient's conjunctiva and another FB in the cornea. He removes the FBs without mentioning using the slit lamp for the corneal removal. How many CPT codes should I report for this encounter?

Tennessee Subscriber

Answer: You should be able to collect payment on three CPT codes in this example, if you include the proper documentation and diagnosis codes.

When the doctor removes foreign bodies from different sections of the same eye, you can report both removals. Your DO performed a separate E/M service prior to the removals, so you should code for that as well. On the claim, report the following codes:

- 65220 (Removal of foreign body, external eye; corneal, without slit lamp) for the corneal FB removal
- 930.0 (Corneal foreign body) linked to 65220 to represent the FB
- 65205 (- conjunctival superficial) for the conjunctival FB removal
- 930.1 (Foreign body in conjunctival sac) linked to 65205 to represent the FB
- 99213 (Office or other outpatient visit for the E/M of an established patient, which requires at least two of these three key components: an expanded problem-focused history; an expanded problem-focused examination; medical decision-making of low complexity) for the E/M
- modifier 25 (Significant, separately identifiable E/M service by the same physician on the same day of the procedure or other service) linked to 99213 to show that the E/M and FB removals were separate services
- 379.91 (Pain in or around eye) linked to 99213 to represent the patient's eye pain.