

Optometry Coding & Billing Alert

You Be the Expert: Scanning Laser With E/M Service

Question: I recently received a denial for a scanning laser test performed with an E/M visit. The E/M was paid, but not the scanning laser. The diagnosis codes were 366.15 and 366.16. What's wrong?

Rhode Island Subscriber

Answer: ICD-9 codes 366.15 (Cortical senile cataract) and 366.16 (Nuclear sclerosis) do not prove that the scanning laser (92135, Scanning computerized ophthalmic diagnostic imaging [e.g., scanning laser] with interpretation and report, unilateral) was medically necessary.

The scanning laser is primarily a test for glaucoma. Therefore, most of the ICD-9 codes that insurers will accept are in the 365.xx (Glaucoma) family.