

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### Coding CVAs? Don't Follow Brand Names

#### **Making assumptions can point you to the wrong code.**

Physicians typically tunnel some brands of catheters and not tunnel others -- but don't let the catheter name dictate your coding.

Hickman, Broviac, and Groshong catheters typically are tunneled, while Hone and triple-lumen catheters are non-tunneled.

"Because tunneled catheters help prevent infection from colonization, they're a good choice for catheters placed for chronic conditions such as dialysis or chemotherapy," says **Scott Groudine, MD**, of Albany Medical Center in Albany, N.Y. "If the catheter is placed urgently and for short-term use, it probably will not need to be tunneled."

Although these terms can provide a clue to proper coding, you should not rely on them exclusively. Likewise, if the anesthesiologist documents placement of a Tesio-type catheter, be sure the device has two separate access sites before reporting 36565 or 36566. Follow the questions outlined above for a complete picture of the CVA's purpose so you can choose the correct code.