Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

ICD-9 Codes improve Adenosine Billing

Luckily, this year's ICD-9 code updates actually made it easier to choose a diagnosis code to explain why a patient needs Adenosine because of an inability to exercise, says consultant **Jim Collins**. Code 719.7 (Difficulty in walking) used to require a fifth digit creating more specificity, but the 2004 edition does away with the extra digit. Other diagnoses that can justify Adenosine include syncopy, pre-syncopy or angina, which make the patients "feel like an elephant is sitting on their chest whenever they start walking."

This year, Medicare replaced J0151, the old code for Adenosine, with J0152. The main difference between the codes is that J0151 used 90-mg doses, while J0152 uses 30-mg doses. This makes it much easier for people who bill in 60-mg doses, Collins says. If you still want to bill for 90 mg, you can just put a "3" in the units column.