

## Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

### In other news ...

The research on negative pressure wound therapy (NPWT) has just been completed by CMS and the Agency of Healthcare Research and Quality, and NPWT proponents may not like the findings.

"The available evidence does not support significant therapeutic distinction of a NPWT system or component of a system," CMS said. In other words, no one NPWT system or part deserves its own HCPCS code. NPWT applies a localized vacuum to draw the edges of the wound together while providing a moist environment to promote rapid wound healing. NPWT is based on two theories:

(1) the removal of excess interstitial fluid decreases edema and concentrations of inhibitory factors and increases local blood flow; and (2) stretching and deformation of the tissue by the negative pressure can disturb the extracellular matrix and introduce biochemical responses that promote wound healing.

The study backing up CMS' decision can be accessed online at [www.ahrq.gov/clinic/ta/negpresswtd/npwtd01.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/ta/negpresswtd/npwtd01.htm).