

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Reader Questions: Consider 45990 for Rectal Exam With Anesthesia

Question: I can't seem to find a proper CPT code for this: The surgeon used a bivalve, suctioned the old blood from where a hemorrhoid had necrosed and fallen off but the large vessel underneath was continuing to bleed (all done under anesthesia). He then sutured the bleeding site. Any suggestions?

Answer: The procedure described above is a rectal exam under anesthesia (45990, Anorectal exam, surgical, requiring anesthesia [general, spinal, or epidural], diagnostic). Do not report 45990 in conjunction with 45300-45327 (Proctosigmoidoscopy), 46600 (Anoscopy; diagnostic, with or without collection of specimen[s] by brushing or washing [separate procedure]), 57410 (Pelvic examination under anesthesia), and 99170 (Anogenital examination with colposcopic magnification in childhood for suspected trauma), according to CCI Edits.

Physician responsibility: Anorectal exam is mainly done by placing the patient in left lateral decubitus position. This exam is mainly done to study Anal Fissures, Anal fistula, Anal mass and Hemorrhoids. The patient is given general, spinal or epidural anesthesia and the physician performs a diagnostic digital rectal exam by inserting a lubricated gloved index finger after relaxation of anal sphincter mainly to examine the perineal area. An anoscope is inserted into the rectum to visualize the anal canal and distal rectum. After removing the anoscope a rigid proctosigmoidoscope is inserted to the anus to visualize sigmoid colon and rectal lumen.