

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Solve The TIPS Medically-Necessary Dilemma At Last

Before you code for transvenous intrahepatic portosystemic shunt (TIPS), you must know when the procedure is--and isn't--medically necessary. Here's a quick primer to help you stay ahead of the TIPS coding curve.

TIPS is considered medically necessary for the following indications:

1. Acute variceal bleeding that cannot be successfully controlled with medical treatment or sclerotherapy;
2. Recurrent variceal bleeding in patients who are resistant to or intolerant of conventional medical management, sclerotherapy or pharmacologic therapy; and
3. Patients with end-stage liver disease who are active candidates for liver transplants and who require bleeding control from esophageal varices.

TIPS is considered not medically necessary for the following indications:

1. As therapy for refractory ascites and portal decompression for patients with hepatic venous outflow obstruction (Budd-Chiari syndrome);
2. As initial therapy of acute variceal hemorrhage;
3. As initial therapy to prevent initial or recurrent variceal hemorrhage; and
4. For reduction of intraoperative morbidity during liver transplant surgery.

Source: www.regence.com/trgmedpol/surgery/sur78.html.