

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

USE LIDOCAINE ONLY FOR CARDIAC ARRHYTHMIAS AND BIER BLOCKS

A new code for 2004, J2001 (Injection, lidocaine HCl for intravenous infusion, 10 mg) made it easier to bill for lidocaine in smaller quantities than the old code, J2000, which specified 50 cc quantities. But you still have to be careful what you bill J2001 for.

Most carriers, such as **Cahaba GBA**, state flatly that they'll cover J2001 for intravenous injection for management of "cardiac arrhythmias and emergencies only." But **Empire Medicare Services** says its local coverage decision, effective late June, will also cover J2001 for intravenous regional anesthesia (or Bier Block) incident to a physician's service.

CCI 10.2 aims to reinforce that prohibition. As of July 1, J2001 is considered a component of over 1,100 surgeries and procedures. You can use a modifier to override these edits, but don't expect the carriers to be very sympathetic unless you can show that the patient had a cardiac arrhythmia, or possibly needed a Bier Block.