

Part B Insider (Multispecialty) Coding Alert

Why-And When-You Should Stop Writing Off Modified Maze Procedures

When your surgeon performs the modified maze procedure at the same session as another surgery in 2007, you may have to write it off because existing codes 33254-33256 are only for stand-alone procedures.

But 2008 brings better options. In January, you'll have three new add-on codes (33257-33259) for when your surgeon performs the modified-maze along with a primary procedure. The three new codes break down into limited, extensive without cardiopulmonary bypass and extensive with cardiopulmonary bypass.

More new cardiovascular surgery codes:

- **When your doctor collects a blood specimen**, you'll have two new codes. CPT code 36591 covers collection from a completely implantable Venous Access Device (VAD), while 36592 covers collection from an established central or peripheral venous catheter, which is -not otherwise specified.-

- **A cutting-edge aortic valve graft procedure**, known as the Tirone David Procedure or the Yacoub Procedure, gets its own code (33864). This involves an ascending aorta graft with a cardiopulmonary bypass for valve suspension. It also includes coronary reconstruction and -valve-sparing aortic annulus remodeling.-

Because the aortic valve is such a complex structure, no valve prosthesis can duplicate its function. So surgeons have developed procedures that either spare the aortic valve or replace it with -very similar autologous tissue,- according to an Aug. 2006 article in the German journal Herz. (-Reconstructive surgery of the aortic valve: the Ross, David and Yacoub Procedures.-)

- **When your physician places a wireless physiologic sensor** in the aneurismal sac during an endovascular repair, you'll have a new code (34806) to report this procedure. It includes radiological supervision and interpretation, instrument calibration, and collection of pressure data. There's also a new code for a bypass graft with vein, in the brachial-ulnar or brachial-radial region (35523).

- You can report **declotting by a thrombolytic agent**, or implanted vascular access device or catheter, using new code 36593.