

Eli's Rehab Report

Reader Question: Nurse Removes Stitches? Report 99211

Question: A motor-vehicle accident patient came to our office for therapy, and our nurse removed four stitches from the patient's arm before the therapist saw her. We did not place the initial sutures; an emergency-department physician made the repair seven days earlier. Can we report the removal, or does the global package cover it?

Kansas Subscriber

Answer: Report 99211 (Office or other outpatient visit for the evaluation and management of an established patient, that may not require the presence of a physician) for the suture removal. Because your physician did not perform the initial repair, the 10-day global period does not apply to your services.

If your physiatrist performed the initial repair, you would report only 12001 (Simple repair of superficial wounds of scalp, neck, axillae, external genitalia, trunk and/or extremities [including hands and feet]; 2.5 cm or less). The suture removal is covered by the 10-day global period for the procedure if the same doctor performs the repair and the removal.