

## Outpatient Facility Coding Alert

### Reader Question: Base Arthroscopy Code on Extent of Debridement

**Question:** How do we report the arthroscopic excision of a detached anterior labral tear with debridement? The surgeon did not do any type of repair during the procedure.

New Mexico Subscriber

**Answer:** Choose between codes 29822 (Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; debridement, limited) or 29823 (Arthroscopy, shoulder, surgical; debridement, extensive), depending upon how extensive the debridement was.

**Definition:** The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS) defines extensive debridement as debridement either in the anterior and posterior aspect of the glenohumeral joint or debridement in two or more joints/spaces -- glenohumeral joint, subacromial bursa, acromioclavicular joint. In your case, 29822 is the appropriate code since the debridement addressed one region (anterior) of a single structure (labrum) in the shoulder.