

Outpatient Facility Coding Alert

Reader Question: Focus On Voiding Trials with an Indwelling Urinary Catheter

Question: How do we code for those patients, who have an indwelling catheter in situ, and require a voiding trial? The nurse does a fill and then removes the catheter. Then we have the patient void. Can we bill 51700 for this even though the catheter was already in place?

Utah Subscriber

Answer: You may resort to 51700 (Bladder irrigation, simple, lavage and/or instillation) for a voiding trial under these atypical circumstances, primarily because the definition for CPT® code 51700 does not mention catheter insertion. CPT® also tells you to not report 51701-51702 when catheter insertion is an inclusive component of another procedure. Therefore, one is able to bill for the bladder filling whether a catheter was inserted at the time of the filling or via a previously placed catheter. No modifiers are necessary.