

## Outpatient Facility Coding Alert

### You Be the Coder: Know What's Included in Turbinate Reduction

**Question:** Following a septoplasty to remove a septal spur, the surgeon performed an inferior turbinate reduction. I am trying to interpret the operative report to determine whether this should be coded as 30801, 30802, or 30930. The report states that the surgeon "performed an inferior turbinate reduction with the coblator bilaterally, outfracturing the inferior turbinates."

Colorado Subscriber

**Answer:** This certainly qualifies as an inferior turbinate reduction, so you can immediately rule out 30930 (Fracture nasal inferior turbinate(s), therapeutic) as an option since under the National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI, or CCI), 30930 bundles into 30802 (Ablation, soft tissue of inferior turbinates, unilateral or bilateral, any method (eg, electrocautery, radiofrequency ablation, or tissue volume reduction); intramural (ie, submucosal)) with a modifier "1" status and has a modifier "0" status with 30801 (Ablation, soft tissue of inferior turbinates, unilateral or bilateral, any method (eg, electrocautery, radiofrequency ablation, or tissue volume reduction); superficial). And since there is no documentation that the surgeon incised the mucosa in order to reach the intramural tissue, code 30802 would also not be appropriate. Code 30801 appears to be the best option in this scenario, but when in doubt, always query the provider.