

Home Health ICD-9/ICD-10 Alert

CODING TIP: You Can Easily Discern The Difference Between 344.61 And 596.54

Documented details will secure case mix points.

To be confident that you are coding neurogenic bladder correctly and getting all the reimbursement your agency deserves for those patients who truly do have cauda equina syndrome, make sure you know the difference between these two conditions.

In its January 2004 newsletter, **Cahaba GBA** explained the difference between these codes:

Cauda equina syndrome (344.61) is a pattern of symptoms such as pain and paresthesia, which arises from spinal cord problems of the lower back (cauda equina). The end of the spinal cord flares out into a "horse's tail" or cauda equina. This could be from compression or problems with the spinal nerve roots, lesions of cauda equina or alkylosing spondylitis.

Important: Not all spinal injuries result in cauda equina syndrome, so don't assume a patient with paraplegia or quadriplegia has cauda equina syndrome.

Neurogenic bladder may present as part of the cauda equina syndrome. The diagnosis of this syndrome must be documented and evident in the medical history in order to support the diagnosis code 344.61.

Neurogenic bladder (596.54) is generally for patients with a neurogenic bladder caused by any other disease process or injury.