

Modifier Coding Alert

Reader Question: Mind Your P Modifiers

Question: I need to determine which physical status modifier to use for a surgery involving a patient with severe hypertension. Anesthesia was administered during surgery and the anesthesiologist used controlled hypotension during the procedure. What P modifier should I use?

Nebraska Subscriber

Answer: The "severe" hypertension classification qualifies the patient for physical status modifier P3 (A patient with severe systemic disease). The anesthesiologist could report 99135 (Anesthesia complicated by utilization of controlled hypotension) in conjunction with the appropriate anesthesia code.

Physical status modifiers (P) help the payer understand the potential risks involved in the administering of anesthesia when considering the patient's health status during a procedure.