

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Question: Suture Removal

Question: Occasionally, our doctor will remove sutures that were placed elsewhere. As far as I know, suture removal is included in the fee for suture placement. Is there a way to bill for just the suture removal?

Delaware Subscriber

Answer: If your physician (or another physician from your group) did not put the sutures in, you may bill for the suture removal. Coders should use the appropriate code for an E/M office visit, (i.e., 99201 or 99212), depending on whether the patient was new or established. Also, append modifier -55 (postoperative management only) to the E/M code when you use a diagnosis code of V58.3 (attention to surgical dressings and sutures).