

Pennsylvania Ortho Society

What to Know for 2011

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So 2010 ends the year like a lion and 2011 begins like a lion – no lamb in the cycle for orthopaedic practices!

As has become customary, CMS is working its last minute magic as it once again stopped the reduction to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule. At the time of this article, the assumption is that the \$36.8729 will remain the magic number for 2011 but rumor has it that as CMS performs their tweaks on RVUs to maintain budget neutrality, there may be minor changes in the actual conversion factor unadjusted for the state of Pennsylvania.

This article highlights several key changes for orthopaedics in 2011. This article is not intended to represent all applicable code changes (revisions, deletions, additions) or guideline changes. We will focus on four major areas of change in 2011.

Introduction of Subsequent Observation Care CPT Codes

These new codes, 99224-99226¹ will be used by orthopaedic practices when the physician or non physician provider (Scope of Practice dependent) admits a patient to observation, the patient remains in observation and the patient is not in a global period.

#● 99224	Subsequent observation care , per day, for the evaluation and management of a patient, which requires at least 2 of these 3 key components: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem focused interval history;• Problem focused examination;• Medical decision making that is straightforward or of low complexity.
#● 99225	Subsequent observation care , per day, for the evaluation and management of a patient, which requires at least 2 of these 3 key components: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An expanded problem focused interval history;• An expanded problem focused examination;• Medical decision making of moderate complexity.
#● 99226	Subsequent observation care , per day, for the evaluation and management of a patient, which requires at least 2 of these 3 key components: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A detailed interval history;• A detailed examination;• Medical decision making of high complexity.

Wound Debridement (1104x)

¹ 2011 Current Procedural Terminology. 2010 American Medical Association. Chicago, Illinois, page 12-13.

In 2011, CPT introduces a significant coding concept change related to the reporting of wound debridement codes. The code range 11040-11044 has been completely revised and the major changes are:

- Elimination of CPT codes 11040 and 11041, which are replaced by CPT code 97597 and 97598 as appropriate for debridement of dermis and epidermal skin layers.
- Reporting of wound debridement based on depth of tissue debridement and size of wound in square centimeters.
- Instructions to “sum” the surface areas of multiple wounds that are of the same depth and to report each wound separately if the tissue debridement is at different tissue depth.
- The addition of add-on codes 11045, 11046 and 11047 for each additional 20 sq. centimeter based on depth of debridement.

CPT code 11044 now reads, “Debridement, subcutaneous tissue (includes epidermis and dermis, muscle and/or fascia if performed); first 20 sq cm or less while the associated new add-on code 11047 is reported for each additional 20 sq cm or part thereof.

In 2011, the physician’s documentation will require the wound size (e.g. 4 cm x 5cm), and the depth of tissue debridement for each individual wound where the procedure is performed. These debridement codes may no longer be reported per wound if the depth of the debridement of multiple wounds exists. The concept now follows the same coding principles as the repair codes.

Hip Arthroscopy

In years past this surgical procedure was performed by few surgeons and the need for CPT codes was not supported. As the incidence of the procedures has increased and the outcomes documented, new codes are introduced in 2011.

29914: Arthroscopy, hip, surgical; with femoroplasty (i.e., treatment of cam lesion)

29915: Arthroscopy, Hip, surgical; with acetabuloplasty (i.e., treatment of pincer lesion)

29916: Arthroscopy, Hip, surgical; with labral repair

The Guideline instructions with these new codes instruct the surgeon that CPT codes 29862 and 29863 are inclusive and not separately reportable. Instructions with CPT code 29916 also instruct the surgeon as follows, “ Do not report 29916 for labral repair secondary to acetabuloplasty...” .

Spine Update

CPT code 20930 and 20931 underwent revisions to their definition providing additional information on the use of these codes. CPT code 20930 now includes a reference to the “placement of osteopromotive material” and CPT code 20931 was revised to support the use of this CPT code in spine surgery only.

Two new spine codes (parent and child code) were introduced in 2011 to report the combined work associated with anterior cervical discectomy /decompression and anterior cervical interbody fusion at the same setting.

22551: Arthrodesis, anterior interbody, including disc space preparation, discectomy, osteophylectomy and decompression of the spinal cord and/or nerve roots; cervical below C2

+22552: cervical below C1, each additional interspace (List separately in addition to code for separate procedure)

The guideline instructions for 63057 and 22554 instruct the physician not to report 63075 and the associated add-on codes and 22554 and the associated add-on codes at the same site, same level.

What's Next?

- Read the entire CPT Manual for the full listing of code changes and guideline instructions. Pay special attention to the new "Coding Tips" feature found throughout the manual.
- Update charge capture tools to reflect the new codes
- Update fee schedules once the 2011 CMS Physician Fee Schedule is released.
- Ensure accurate and correct coding within the practice.
- Develop an internal audit plan and begin auditing E&M services and surgical cases both retrospectively and prospectively.
- Follow closely the Highmark Medicare site for information on updates, changes and areas of audit risk to ensure compliance with Medicare. You cannot prevent a RAC audit on services previously submitted and paid; you can minimize your risk in the future!
- Plan to attend a POS sponsored coding course presented by KarenZupko & Associates, Inc in April. Choose the city of your choice---Pittsburgh or Philadelphia.