Billing Pearls
John Rumpakis, O.D.

Recurrent corneal erosions are pretty common in patients with corneal dystrophies and endothelial basement membrane disease. Part of a common treatment protocol may include the use of a bandage contact lens to aid in both the patient's comfort and healing process.

In January 2012, the long-standing CPT code 92070, fitting of a contact lens for medical or therapeutic purposes, including lens, was retired. It was replaced with two separate codes, 92071 and 92072. For the purposes of this article we will limit our discussion to 92071, as 92072 is now specifically dedicated to the fitting of a lens for keratoconus.

The 2013 CPT describes 92071 as follows:

- Fitting of a contact lens for treatment of ocular surface disease. Please report materials in addition to this code, using either 99070 or the appropriate HCPCS Level II material code.

The application of this code related to our topic this month is fairly straightforward since there is little dispute that corneal dystrophies and EBMD are considered contributory diseases of the ocular surface. In order for us to understand how to bill this CPT code, it is important to know some of the foundational information related to the code.

1. It is a unilateral code, therefore when billing it please use the modifier –RT or –LT to designate which eye the fitting is being performed on.
2. It is designated as a code that can be billed in addition to either a 920XX or 992XX office visit service, if one was performed. This can be billed on the same day of service according to the National Correct Coding Initiative guidelines.
3. There is no global period associated with 92071 as global periods only apply to surgical code.

Materials can be billed in addition to the fitting. Now here’s the catch. You cannot bill for materials if you are simply using an EW disposable trial lens from one of your lens banks. The lens material must be approved as a bandage lens and it must be a revenue lens that you have paid for. For example, you could purchase a box of plano Night & Day lenses specifically for this purpose. You bill this lens using the appropriate HCPCS Level II code, such as V2523 (contact lens, hydrophilic, extended wear) per CPT rules as it would meet the description of an EW Hydrophilic lens by the FDA. Never use V2599 (contact lens, other type) unless no other HCPCS Level II code correctly describes the lens that you are providing.

One last thing, please make sure that your medical record properly reflects exactly what you did. This may include the chief complaint, the procedures that you performed to make a proper diagnosis, your treatment plans, and subsequent orders. Please indicate what type of lens that you fit with specific parameters in the medical record as well. Meticulous record keeping will help keep you safe should a carrier request records for a particular patient or in a broader post-payment review.

Understanding these simple, but important rules and guidelines can allow you to effectively provide appropriate care for your patient and allow you to get properly compensated for your professional services and materials.
Dr. Rumpakis is a 1984 graduate of Pacific University College of Optometry. He is currently president and chief executive officer of Practice Resource Management, Inc. Recently named the Chief Medical Coding Editor for Review of Optometry, he has been extensively published on the topics of third-party coding and billing, practice management, team building and maximizing effectiveness and profitability, including the textbook “Business Aspects of Optometry.” Dr. Rumpakis is a popular lecturer both nationally and internationally. He currently serves on the AOA’s Optometry’s Meeting® Exhibits Committee and was the primary architect of the AOA Advantage program.

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