

Spinal Surgery Webinar question on vertebral corpectomy procedures

by Monica Leisch, RHIA, CCS

In November, the CHIA Coding and Data Quality (CDQ) Committee presented the Coding Round Table Webinar titled “Spinal Surgery.” Several questions were raised during the presentation that will be discussed in a series of articles. This first article will address the question of how vertebral corpectomies are coded.

Question

Partial corpectomies are often documented. What portion of the vertebral body needs to be excised to code this? What is the difference between a discectomy and a corpectomy?

Answer

The corpus vertebrae comprise the entire vertebrae body which includes the non-bony disk and surrounding bone structures. Therefore a corpectomy includes more than just the excision of the disc.

Procedure description

A lumbar corpectomy is performed using the lateral extracavitary approach to the anterior lumbar spine. It is used to treat spinal tumors, infections, and fractures. This technique uses a posterior incision with a posterior-lateral dissection to the anterior spinal region that allows simultaneous anterior and posterior spinal exposure for decompression and arthrodesis (fusion). The surgeon is able to remove the posterior spinal structures (such as the lamina and facet joints) along with the anterior spinal structures (vertebral bodies and discs) and their associated pathology. It is used in circumstances where a larger surgical area is needed compared to more limited posterior exposures of the anterior spine such as for disc decompression.

CPT codes

Corpectomy partial or complete lateral extracavitary approach with decompression of the spinal cord and/or nerve root is coded as 63102 for the first segment, lumbar, (L3-L4), and 63103, for each additional lumbar segment, (L4-L5).

ICD-9-CM procedure code

80.99, excision of joint and/or joint structures

ICD-10-PCS code

0SB00ZZ, excision lumbar joint open approach

The CHIA CDQ Committee will continue to answer the questions posed at the November Coding Roundtable Webinar. Look for more articles coming soon.

References

CPT Assistant, October 2009 Page: 9, 14

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