

Fine Needle Aspiration

Q: How do I code for fine needle aspiration?

A: The codes are CPT 10021 Fine needle aspiration; without imaging guidance and CPT 10022 Fine needle aspiration; with imaging guidance. Each code has a professional and technical component.

CPT 10021 is described when a physician utilizes a fine gauge needle and syringe to obtain fluid or cells from a palpable mass by using quick, in and out motions to suction matter out of the mass until an adequate amount of material is obtained. In CPT 10022, the mass is non-palpable and image guidance is required to obtain the specimen in the same fashion.

According to the Federal Register Volume 66 Number 212, the Relative Values have increased to 2.39 for 10021 and 2.46 for 10022 from their predecessors values of 2.23 for 88170 and 2.07 for 88171. This is a result of an increase in the practice expense value scale. There will be a slight increase in reimbursement, however very insignificant, due to the 5.4% drop in the Medicare conversion factor from \$38.26 to \$36.20.

Reviewed 8/4/06

Revised 5/3/07