



**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
OTOLARYNGOLOGY-  
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY**

January 16, 2018

Dear Colleague:

The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) acknowledges the benefit of use of absorbable nasal implants for treatment of nasal valve collapse, based on currently available data. The Academy believes this implant technology may be of significant benefit to select patients. The AAO-HNS recommends the use of an unlisted code, 30999, to report placement of an absorbable nasal implant, including the Latera device. We understand the reimbursement of unlisted codes can often be challenging. Therefore, we are providing the attached statement for your use in outreach to payers regarding coverage and payment of procedures utilizing absorbable nasal implants.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James C. Denny III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

James C. Denny III, MD, FACS  
Executive Vice President and CEO



**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
OTOLARYNGOLOGY–  
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY**

**AAO-HNS Statement on Absorbable Nasal Implants  
(January 2018)**

The American Academy of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS), with approximately 11,000 members nationwide, is the national medical association of physicians dedicated to the care of patients with disorders of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. The medical ailments treated by our specialty are among the most common that afflict all Americans, old and young, including hearing loss, balance disorders, chronic ear infections, rhinological disorders, snoring and sleep disorders, swallowing disorders, facial and other cranial nerve disorders, and head and neck cancer.

The AAO-HNS acknowledges the benefit of use of absorbable nasal implants for nasal valve collapse, based on currently available data. Patients with nasal valve collapse commonly suffer from nasal obstruction. When patients are identified with nasal valve narrowing or collapse, they benefit from procedures intended to strengthen and support the lateral nasal wall. The placement of absorbable nasal implants offers patients a safe and effective treatment for nasal valve obstruction.

A recently published study evaluated placement of 56 absorbable nasal implants in 30 patients, each with isolated nasal valve collapse and a Nasal Obstruction Symptom Evaluation (NOSE) of greater than or equal to 55 (with a mean preoperative score of 76.7). A severity classification system for Nasal Airway Obstruction (NAO) was used to categorize the patients into four classes based on their NOSE score: mild (5-25 points), moderate (30-50 points), severe (55-75 points), or extreme (80-100 points). There was a significant improvement seen in the post-procedure NOSE score at 12 months. Further studies are ongoing, and preliminary results of these additional studies are equally as promising.<sup>1</sup>

The AAO-HNS believes this implant technology may be of significant benefit to select patients. We recommend the use of an unlisted code, 30999, to report placement of an absorbable nasal implant. We understand the reimbursement of unlisted codes can often be challenging; however, unlisted codes must be reported when an appropriate Category I or III CPT code does not exist to describe procedures utilizing new technology. Please see the AAO-HNS CPT for ENT entitled “Utilizing Unlisted CPT Codes” at the following link: <http://www.entnet.org/content/cpt-ent-utilizing-unlisted-cpt-codes>

**REFERENCES**

1. San Nicolo M, Stelter K, Sadick H, et al. Absorbable Implant to Treat Nasal Valve Collapse. *Facial Plast Surg* 2017;32:233-40.