

## CAN I GET PAID IF MY NURSE DOES EAR LAVAGE FOR CERUMEN REMOVAL?



Recorded April, 2022

1

### Cerumen removal: two codes

---

69209 Removal impacted cerumen using irrigation/lavage, unilateral

- Service performed by staff member
- No work RVUs

69210 Removal impacted cerumen requiring instrumentation, unilateral

- Service performed by physician/NP/PA with instrumentation

Recorded April 2022 © 2022 Betsy Nicoletti

2

## Cerumen removal: two codes

---

69209 Removal impacted cerumen using irrigation/lavage, unilateral

69210 Removal impacted cerumen requiring instrumentation, unilateral

- Per CPT, you may not bill both of these codes on the same day
- CMS does not pay them as bilateral codes

Recorded April 2022 © 2022 Betsy Nicoletti

3

## Medical necessity

---

Any one of the four criteria meet the necessity

- Visual considerations: Cerumen impairs exam of clinically significant portions of the external auditory canal, tympanic membrane, or middle ear condition.
- Qualitative considerations: Extremely hard, dry, irritative cerumen causing symptoms such as pain, itching, hearing loss, etc.
- Inflammatory considerations: Associated with foul odor, infection, or dermatitis.
- Quantitative considerations: Obstructive, copious cerumen that cannot be removed without magnification and multiple instrumentations requiring physician skills.

Recorded April 2022 © 2022 Betsy Nicoletti

4

## Cerumen removal

---

- May be billed on the same day as an E/M service when it meets the description of a significant, separate service
- If patient is scheduled for cerumen removal, do not bill an E/M service

Recorded April 2022 © 2022 Betsy Nicoletti

5

## Yes, you can be paid

---

- If the nurse removes impacted cerumen with lavage

Recorded April 2022 © 2022 Betsy Nicoletti

6

## Thank you

---



- [www.betsynicoletti.com](http://www.betsynicoletti.com)
- [www.codingintel.com](http://www.codingintel.com)
- Follow me on twitter  
@BetsyNicoletti



Recorded April 2022 © 2022 Betsy Nicoletti