

## WOUND REPAIRS

### FOR ALL REPAIRS DOCUMENT:

- Length of wound
- Location of wound
- The presence of any foreign body
- Material used to close wound:
  - Sutures
  - Tissue adhesive
  - Staples
  - Steri-strips (not separately billable, included in E/M)
  - Zip stitch (not separately billable, included in E/M)

### DOCUMENTING LENGTH

- Measure and record in centimeters, whether curved, angular, or stellate.
- Avoid documenting “about” or “approximately” with lengths as this may result in coders having to select a lower CPT code for wound repair.
- If lengths are not documented and repair note is documented your coders will not return to request lengths but will select the lowest wound repair CPT code (typically 2.5 cm or less).

### REPAIR CODES ARE GROUPED ANATOMICALLY IN CPT

- Simple Repairs grouped as:
  - Scalp, neck, axillae, external genitalia, trunk and/or extremities including hands and feet
  - Face, ears, eyelids, nose, lips and/or mucous membranes
- Intermediate repairs grouped as:
  - Scalp, axillae, trunk and/or extremities excluding hands and feet
  - Neck, hands, feet and/or external genitalia
  - Face, ear, eyelids, nose, lips and/or mucous membrane
- Complex repairs grouped as:
  - Trunk
  - Scalp, arms and /or legs
  - forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands and/or feet
  - eyelids, nose, ears and/or lips

**Tip:** When multiple wounds are repaired: Document each closure separately or add together the lengths of those in the same classification (Simple, Intermediate, Complex)

### **SIMPLE REPAIR DOCUMENT:**

- Single layer closure
- Wound edges are clean
- No foreign body

### **INTERMEDIATE REPAIRS DOCUMENT:**

- Layered closure, and/or
- Extensive cleaning, and/or
- Removal of foreign body, and/or
- Simple trimming or debridement, and/or
- Limited undermining (defined as a distance LESS THAN the maximum width of the defect, measured perpendicular to the closure line)

### **COMPLEX REPAIRS DOCUMENT:**

- In addition to the requirements of intermediate repair, document any of the following as appropriate:
  - Exposure of bone, cartilage, tendon, or named neurovascular structure
  - Debridement of wound edges (e.g., traumatic lacerations or avulsions)
  - Extensive undermining (defined as a distance greater than or equal to the maximum width of the deficit, measured perpendicular to the closure line along at least one entire edge of the deficit).
  - Involvement of free margins of helical rim, vermillion border, or nostril rim
  - Placement of retention sutures.
  - Necessary preparation includes creation of limited defect for repairs or the debridement of complicated lacerations or avulsions.

### **OTHER REPAIRS**

- Wound dehiscence, document
  - Simple or complex
  - Use of packing
- Lip full thickness, document:
  - Vermillion border only
  - Up to half vertical height
  - Over half vertical height
- Mouth, document
  - Location
    - Vestibule
    - Tongue
  - Length