

July 2017

00530, 00534, or 00537: Which Code Should I Report?

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The American Society of Anesthesiologists regularly receives questions regarding proper coding of anesthesia procedures. We consider these questions when revising the Relative Value Guide® (RVG) and CROSSWALK® publications to provide guidance to our members. We have seen several questions recently regarding the appropriate use of CPT® codes 00530, 00534 and 00537. This article will seek to clarify some situations in which these three codes are reported.

CPT Code 00530 - *Anesthesia for permanent transvenous pacemaker insertion.*

This anesthesia code describes those situations in which the cardiac surgeon or cardiologist inserts a simple cardiac pacemaker. According to the RVG, a pacemaker “consists of a pulse generator, electronics, a battery and one or more leads.” When one of these devices is implanted, the most appropriate anesthesia code to report is typically CPT code 00530. This code covers all anesthesia services involved in the insertion and testing of transvenous cardiac pacemakers, including programming the device.

An example of a surgical procedure reported with anesthesia code 00530 is CPT code 33208 - *Insertion of new or replacement of permanent pacemaker with transvenous electrode(s); atrial and ventricular.*

CPT Code 00534 - *Anesthesia for transvenous insertion or replacement of pacing cardio-defibrillator.*

The RVG Comment associated with this code states that an “implantable defibrillator or cardioverter (ICD/C) includes the same physical components as a pacemaker.” When an ICD/C is implanted, testing includes all pacemaker testing along with the additional programming and active testing of the cardioversion or defibrillator functions. “Active testing” includes the induction of arrhythmias with sensing and treatment by the ICD/C device. It is important to note that the induction of arrhythmias for testing and programming an ICD/C device does not justify reporting anesthesia services with CPT code 00537. If an ICD/C device is implanted but testing does not include induction of arrhythmias and confirmation of treatment by the device, the anesthesia service is reported with 00530, not 00534.

Examples of a surgical procedures reported with anesthesia code 00534 include CPT code 33249 - *Insertion or replacement of permanent implantable defibrillator system, with*

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transvenous lead(s), single or dual chamber and CPT code 93642 - Electrophysiologic evaluation of single or dual chamber transvenous pacing cardioverter-defibrillator (includes defibrillation threshold evaluation, induction of arrhythmia, evaluation of sensing and pacing for arrhythmia termination, and programming or reprogramming of sensing or therapeutic parameters).*

*In some instances, the most appropriate anesthesia code for the procedure described by CPT code 33249 may be 00530 rather than 00534.

CPT code 00537 - Anesthesia for cardiac electrophysiologic procedures including radiofrequency ablation.

There are no surgical device implantation codes that cross to CPT code 00537. This code is reserved for reporting anesthesia for more complex electrophysiologic procedures, not simply inserting an ICD/C device, even though insertion of such devices includes the induction of arrhythmias and confirmation of proper treatment by the ICD/C device.

One example of a procedure reported with anesthesia code 00537 is CPT code 93653 - *Comprehensive electrophysiologic evaluation including insertion and repositioning of multiple electrode catheters with induction or attempted induction of an arrhythmia with right atrial pacing and recording, right ventricular pacing and recording (when necessary), and His bundle recording (when necessary) with intracardiac catheter ablation of arrhythmogenic focus; with treatment of supraventricular tachycardia by ablation of fast or slow atrioventricular pathway, accessory atrioventricular connection, cavo-tricuspid isthmus or other single atrial focus or source of atrial re-entry.*

The three anesthesia codes discussed above are reproduced here along with the RVG Comments that appear with those codes in the ASA RVG publication. RVG Comments do not appear in the American Medical Association Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Manual. The codes and full RVG Comments are:

00530 Anesthesia for permanent transvenous pacemaker insertion
(RVG Comment: A pacemaker consists of a pulse generator, electronics, a battery and one or more leads. Pacemaker placement includes programming and testing of both lead and generator functionality. Anesthesia management for placement of cardiac implantable electronic devices that involve this level of testing is reported with code 00530.)

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Timely Topics

PAYMENT AND PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

00534 Anesthesia for transvenous insertion or replacement of pacing cardioverter-defibrillator

(RVG Comment: *An implantable defibrillator or cardioverter (ICD/C) includes the same physical components as a pacemaker. ICD/C testing includes all pacemaker testing with additional programming and additional active testing of the cardioversion or defibrillator functions. Active testing includes the induction of an arrhythmia with sensing and treatment by the ICD/C device. Anesthesia management for the placement and testing of an ICD/C is reported with code 00534 if the cardioversion or defibrillator functions are tested. If the cardioversion or defibrillator functions are not tested, report anesthesia management with code 00530.*)

00537 Anesthesia for cardiac electrophysiologic procedures including radiofrequency ablation

(RVG Comment: *To be used only for electrophysiologic procedures. For testing of an ICD/C, see 00534.*)

Sources:

2017 Relative Value Guide
2017 CROSSWALK

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