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Policy & Advocacy *BRIEF*

AUA POLICY & ADVOCACY BRIEF: MARCH 4, 2015

Pediatric Hypospadias Repair: A New Consensus Document on Coding

Guest Author: David Ewalt, M.D., Pediatric Hypospadias Repair Workgroup chair and member of the AUA Coding and Reimbursement Committee

Introduction

As a result of numerous questions received on the American Urological Association's (AUA) Coding Hotline and since no consensus could be identified on the appropriate reporting of hypospadias repair, the AUA Coding and Reimbursement Committee convened a workgroup consisting of pediatric urologic experts from around the country to discuss coding guidelines for hypospadias reconstruction. Once the coding guidelines were defined, the AUA recommendations were vetted through members of the American Academy of Pediatric Urology (AAPU), Urology fellows of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and members of the Pediatric Urology Coordinating Council of the Society of Pediatric Urology (SPU). The most common comment concerned the correction of penile curvature or penile chordee. The correction of penile curvature has always been included in all primary codes and, therefore, should not be unbundled. The comments were then coordinated and included in the coding guidelines.

What is hypospadias?

Hypospadias is a male birth defect in which the opening of the tube that carries urine from the body (urethra) develops abnormally on the underside of the penis. The opening can occur anywhere from just below its normal location at the end of the penis to the perineum behind the scrotum. Hypospadias is often associated with a ventral curvature of the penis (penile chordee) or abnormal rotation of the penile shaft (penile torsion). Abnormal development of the scrotum (peno-scrotal fusion, bifid scrotum, or peno-scrotal transposition) may also be associated with hypospadias. Hypospadias most often occurs as an isolated birth defect without detectable abnormality of the remainder of the reproductive or endocrine system.

Hypospadias is not a uniform disorder which explains the plethora of CPT codes used to describe its surgical correction. In addition, over the past 20 years, a variety of creative surgical techniques have been incorporated with the traditional procedures to improve the surgical outcomes and cosmetic results. Distal and mid-shaft hypospadias is the most common type of hypospadias (in which the urethral orifice opens at the mid or distal shaft of the penis) and is usually corrected in a single surgical procedure (1 stage repair). Proximal and perineal hypospadias is less common and is often associated severe ventral penile curvature with or without abnormal scrotal development and may require surgical staging (2 stage repair) to correct.

Primary Procedure Codes

Primary procedures codes represents the baseline or primary hypospadias repair code for either a one-stage repair or the first or second stage of a planned two-stage repair.

Current Primary Procedure Codes

54304 Plastic operation on penis for correction of chordee or for first stage hypospadias repair with or without transplantation of prepuce and/or skin flaps

54308 Urethroplasty for second stage hypospadias repair (including urinary diversion); less than 3 cm.

54312 Urethroplasty for second stage hypospadias repair (including urinary diversion); greater than 3 cm.

54322 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with simple meatal advancement (eg. Magpi, V-flap)

54324 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with urethroplasty by local skin flaps (eg, flip-flap, prepuccial flap)

54326 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with urethroplasty by local skin flaps and mobilization of urethra.

54328 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with extensive dissection to correct chordee and urethroplasty with local skin flaps, skin graft patch, and/or island flap.

54332 1-stage proximal penile or penoscrotal hypospadias repair requiring extensive dissection to correct chordee and urethroplasty by use of skin graft tube and/or island flap

54336 1-stage perineal hypospadias repair requiring extensive dissection to correct chordee and urethroplasty by use of skin graft tube and/or island flap.

Secondary Procedure Codes

Secondary procedure codes represent additional or adjunct procedures performed in conjunction with the primary procedure. These may include a variety of more recently described tissue flaps, grafts and scrotal procedures that have been developed and incorporated with the primary procedure. They are performed in hypospadias reconstruction to decrease surgical complications, decrease the need for revision surgery, and improve cosmetic outcomes.

Secondary Flap Codes

A variety of local flaps are now routinely used in hypospadias surgery to decrease complications and the rate of secondary surgery.

Code 15740

For primary codes 54328, 54332, and 54336, a de-epithelialized **dartos island flap** is included in the one-stage repair and therefore secondary code 15740 Flap; island pedicle requiring identification and dissection of anatomically named axial vessel should not be additionally added or unbundled if this flap is used to cover the urethroplasty to prevent fistula formation. However, secondary code 15740 may be used for a tunica vaginalis flap for urethroplasty coverage for primary codes 54324, 54326, 54328, 54332, and 54336 as it is not the flap referred to in the primary code.

Code 14040

Code 14040 can be added when a Byar's flap (skin flap made of dorsal prepuce to resurface the ventral penis) is utilized when extensive reconfiguration of the dorsal prepuce is necessary to cover the skin defect on the ventral surface of the penis. Code 14040 can be added when a de-epithelialized scrotal flap is utilized to cover the urethroplasty to prevent fistula formation.

Secondary Graft Codes

A variety of grafts are now used in hypospadias surgery to decrease complications and the rate of secondary surgery. Each secondary code when used should be clearly described and documented with the rationale for

its use (buccal mucosa for urethral reconstruction, dermis and SIS for corporal straightening as an example) in the operative note.

15240 Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; 20 sq cm or less (Buccal Graft)

15120 Split-thickness autograft, face, scalp, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, feet, and/or multiple digits; first 100 sq cm or less, or 1% of body area of infants and children

20926 Tissue grafts, other (eg, paratendon, fat, dermis) (Tissue graft harvest: Dermal Graft)

15777 Implantation of biologic implant (eg, acellular dermal matrix) for soft tissue reinforcement (eg, breast, trunk) (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure) [Xenograft placement (SIS - Small Intestine Submucosa)]

Other Secondary Codes

55175 Scrotoplasty; simple

55180 Scrotoplasty; complicated

51102 Aspiration of bladder; with insertion of suprapubic catheter

Recommended Coding Guidelines for Hypospadias Repair

The recommendations are guidelines with a degree of latitude given the variability of associated anomalies found in conjunction with hypospadias (penile chordee or angulation, penile torsion, peno-scrotal fusion, bifid scrotum, peno-scrotal transposition). After careful review and discussion, a guideline for coding five typical clinical scenarios was developed for initial surgical repairs. These guidelines are for *initial* hypospadias repairs only and are not to be used for repair of hypospadias complications or *revision* surgery. Detailed documentation in the operative report must support the use of each primary and secondary code (additional codes may be used as the guideline is not intended to include all codes given the variety of techniques utilized for hypospadias surgery). Additionally if possible, the medical rationale for the use of a secondary code to improve the outcome of the surgery is encouraged. Correction of penile chordee or penile curvature for all single-stage repairs has always been included with all primary codes since their inception regardless of the technique used to effect penile straightening (additional codes such as 54300, 54304, or 54360 should not be added or unbundled for a dorsal plication stitch or a Nesbitt wedge as an example).

Single-Stage Hypospadias Repairs

Distal Hypospadias – Single Stage

Clinical Vignette: The parents of a male with a distal shaft hypospadias request repair of the congenital anomaly. The parents have been counseled on the surgical risks, complications, benefits and alternatives to not having the procedure. The parents elect to proceed with the procedure.

Primary code (Includes Chordee Correction)

54322 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with simple meatal advancement (eg. Magpi, V-flap)

or

54324 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with urethroplasty by local skin flaps (eg, flip-flap, prepuccial flap)

Secondary codes if performed

15740 Flap; island pedicle requiring identification and dissection of anatomically named axial vessel, (Use selectively as described in the Introduction)

14040 Adjacent tissue transfer or rearrangement, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands and/or feet; defect 10 sq cm or less (Byar's Flap)

15240 Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; 20 sq cm or less (Buccal Graft)

55175 Scrotoplasty; simple

55180 Scrotoplasty; complicated

51102 Aspiration of bladder; with insertion of suprapubic catheter

Mid-shaft Hypospadias- Single Stage (Includes Chordee Correction)

Clinical Vignette: The parents of a male with a mid-shaft hypospadias request repair of the congenital anomaly. The parents have been counseled on the surgical risks, complications, benefits and alternatives to not having the procedure. The parents elect to proceed with the procedure.

Primary Code

54324 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with urethroplasty by local skin flaps (eg, flip-flap, prepuccial flap)

or

54326 1-stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with urethroplasty by local skin flaps and mobilization of urethra.

or

54328 One stage distal hypospadias repair (with or without chordee or circumcision); with extensive dissection to correct chordee and urethroplasty with local skin flaps, skin graft patch, and/or island flap.

Secondary codes if performed

15740 Flap; island pedicle requiring identification and dissection of anatomically named axial vessel, (Use selectively as described in the Introduction)

15240 Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; 20 sq cm or less (Buccal Graft)

14040 Adjacent tissue transfer or rearrangement, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands and/or feet; defect 10 sq cm or less (Byar's Flap)

55175 Scrotoplasty; simple

55180 Scrotoplasty; complicated

51102 Aspiration of bladder; with insertion of suprapubic catheter

Proximal Hypospadias – Single Stage (Includes Chordee Correction)

Clinical Vignette: The parents of a male with a proximal shaft hypospadias request repair of the congenital anomaly. The parents have been counseled on the surgical risks, complications, benefits and alternatives to not having the procedure. The parents elect to proceed with the procedure.

Primary Code (Includes Chordee Correction)

54332 One stage proximal penile or penoscrotal hypospadias repair requiring extensive dissection to correct chordee and urethroplasty by use of skin graft tube and/or island flap

or

54336 One stage perineal hypospadias repair requiring extensive dissection to correct chordee and urethroplasty by use of skin graft tube and/or island flap.

Secondary codes if performed

14040 Adjacent tissue transfer or rearrangement, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands and/or feet; defect 10 sq cm or less (Byar's Flap)

15740 Flap; island pedicle requiring identification and dissection of anatomically named axial vessel, (Use selectively as described in the Introduction)

15240 Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; 20 sq cm or less (Buccal Graft)

55175 Scrotoplasty; simple

55180 Scrotoplasty; complicated

51102 Aspiration of bladder; with insertion of suprapubic catheter

Two-Stage Hypospadias Repairs

Proximal First Stage Repair of planned two-stage repair

Clinical Vignette: The parents of a male with a proximal shaft hypospadias request repair of the congenital anomaly. In the opinion of the attending surgeon, the severity of the hypospadias and its associated penile chordee and scrotal malformation is such that the surgery will require two separate surgical settings (two-stage) to obtain an optimal outcome. The parents have been counseled on the surgical risks, complications, benefits and alternatives to not having the procedure. The parents elect to proceed with the procedure.

Primary Code

54304 Plastic operation on penis for correction of chordee or for first-stage hypospadias repair with or without transplantation of prepuce and/or skin flaps

Secondary codes if performed

14040 Adjacent tissue transfer or rearrangement, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands and/or feet; defect 10 sq cm or less (Byar's Flap)

15120 Split-thickness autograft, face, scalp, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, feet, and/or multiple digits; first 100 sq cm or less, or 1% of body area of infants and children

15240 Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; 20 sq cm or less (Buccal Graft)

15740 Flap; island pedicle requiring identification and dissection of anatomically named axial vessel

15777 Implantation of biologic implant (eg, acellular dermal matrix) for soft tissue reinforcement (eg, breast, trunk) (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure) [Xenograft placement (SIS - Small Intestine Submucosa)]

20926 Tissue graft harvest (Dermal Graft)

55175 Scrotoplasty; simple

55180 Scrotoplasty; complicated

51102 Aspiration of bladder; with insertion of suprapubic catheter

Proximal Second Stage Repair of planned two-stage repair

Clinical Vignette: The parents of a male with a proximal shaft hypospadias who has already undergone a first stage of a planned two-stage repair request the second surgical repair. The parents have been counseled on the surgical risks, complications, benefits and alternatives to not having the procedure. The parents elect to proceed with the procedure.

Primary Code

54308 Urethroplasty for second stage hypospadias repair (including urinary diversion); less than 3 cm.

or

54312 Urethroplasty for second stage hypospadias repair (including urinary diversion); greater than 3 cm.

Secondary codes if performed

14040 Adjacent tissue transfer or rearrangement, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands and/or feet; defect 10 sq cm or less (Byar's Flap)

15120 Split-thickness autograft, face, scalp, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, feet, and/or multiple digits; first 100 sq cm or less, or 1% of body area of infants and children

15240 Full thickness graft, free, including direct closure of donor site, forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, neck, axillae, genitalia, hands, and/or feet; 20 sq cm or less (Buccal Graft)

15740 Flap; island pedicle requiring identification and dissection of anatomically named axial vessel, (Use selectively as described in the Introduction)

20926 Tissue graft harvest (Dermal Graft)

55175 Scrotoplasty; simple

55180 Scrotoplasty; complicated

51102 Aspiration of bladder; with insertion of suprapubic catheter

The surgical operative report must include documentation to support each procedure performed and submitted in the medical claim.

The members of the AUA Pediatric Hypospadias Workgroup include David H. Ewalt, MD, Chair, Urology Clinics of North Texas; Howard M. Snyder, III, MD, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia; Mark C. Adams, Vanderbilt Hospital, MD; Laurence S. Baskin, MD, University of California San Francisco, Benioff Children's Hospital; Douglas A. Canning, MD, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia ; Earl Y. Cheng, MD, Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago; and Bradley P. Kropp, MD, University of Oklahoma, Health Sciences Center.

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