

Tutorial of the Coding Consultant

www.PathLabCoding.com

Step 1: Accessing the Coding Consultant

After logging in and clicking on the Coding Consultant at top of the page, you will see the following screenshot of the Inbox of your personal Coding Consultant.

- You can create an inquiry by clicking “New”.
- You can View responses to current and past inquiries by clicking “View”.

The screenshot shows the PathLab Coding Solutions website. The main content area is titled "The Coding Consultant" and contains a table of inquiries. A callout box on the left points to the "New" button, and a callout box on the right points to the "View" column in the table.

Click “New” to Create an Inquiry

Click “View” to Open and View an Inquiry

Inquiry #	Summary	Submitted Date	Status	View	Edit
183	Special Stains: Cocktails	Jan 02 2009, 10:36 AM	Closed	View	Edit
182	Special Stains: Cocktails	Jan 02 2009, 10:23 AM	Closed	View	Edit
179	Left Breast Cyst Aspirate 88160 or 88173	Dec 30 2008, 11:36 AM	Closed	View	Edit
178	Colon Biopsies	Dec 30 2008, 11:14 AM	Closed	View	Edit

Step 2: Submitting/Saving an Inquiry

You can submit an inquiry by completing the summary and coding inquiry fields, clicking "Save Inquiry" and attach a copy of the corresponding pathology report. An email confirmation will be sent to you, the subscriber, that the inquiry was submitted.

Coding Inquiry

Edit Inquiry

Inquiry Number: 191
Submitted Date: 1/6/2009 4:50:57 PM
Status: Open
Summary: *
Left Breast Cyst Aspirate 88160 or 88173

Inquiry **Attachments** **Additional Information** **Rationale**

Coding Inquiry:
Note: Each inquiry submitted must contain only one brief and unambiguous case that addresses one specific pathology-related CPT coding issue but does not include any patient identifying information (e.g., name or social security number). An electronic or fax copy of the relevant pathology report with patient-identifying information redacted should be submitted with the question in order to ensure accuracy of the response. Fax Number (843) 269-2220.
Original Inquiry 1/6/2009 4:50:57 PM
I received in a cardboard slide holder, a single unstained slide labeled as "Left cyst aspirate." The Microscopic Evaluation: Examination reveals amorphous cellular debris and degenerating cells of undetermined type and no definite epithelial cells or malignant cells are identified. The Final Diagnosis: Left Breast Cyst, Aspirate Smear: Small amounts of amorphous cellular debris, no epithelial cells and no malignant cells identified.
Should this be coded 88160 or 88173

Thank you!
Your inquiry has been submitted, you will receive a confirmation email.

Save Inquiry **Close**

Step 3: Viewing a Response/Rationale

Once a response to the inquiry is available, an email will be sent to you, the subscriber. You can then open and view the coding recommendations and rationale to the inquiry in a printable format.

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Printable Inquiry Version:
Please take a few moments to answer the following questions regarding your inquiry.

Inquiry Details:

Inquiry Number:	183	Date Submitted:	1/2/2009
Inquiry Status:	Closed	Date Completed:	1/5/2009

Inquiry Summary: Special Stains: Cocktails

Question:
The patient's clinical history indicates the need for an Alcian Blue/PAS stain, which is performed on a single slide. The pathologist interprets and documents as follows:
AB – Reveals no glandular epithelium.
PAS – No fungi are identified with stain.
Should this be coded as a 88313 and 88312?

Rationale Details:

Coding Recommendation: 88312 and 88313

Rationale:
Thank you for submitting your inquiry to PathLab Coding Solutions for review. In this scenario, both the Alcian Blue and PAS stains are performed on a single slide. This is referred to as a "Cocktail" stain. Per the advice from the June 2004 issue of CAP Today, "Your CPT Questions," it is appropriate to bill separately for the antibodies in a cocktail stain when each stain can be differentiated microscopically. In this instance, the pathologist provided a distinct interpretation for each of the two stains; therefore both stains should be reported. The Alcian Blue is reported as a Group II stain (88313), and because the PAS stain is used to identify fungus it is reported as a Group I stain (88312). The key is clearly documenting the interpretation of each stain.

Attachments:

Filename	View
1 CAP cocktail stains.htm	View

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Please take a few moments to answer the following questions regarding your inquiry.
The information provided in this communication is designed to be a resource for pathology coding and every