



### In This Issue

- Laceration Repairs
- Simple Repair Codes
- Intermediate Repair Codes
- Complex Repair Codes
- CPT Instructions for Wound Repair
- Examples

### Quick Links

[Maxim Health Information Services](#)

[Career Opportunities for Coders](#)

[Submit Your HIM/Revenue Cycle Need](#)

### About Maxim Health Information Services

Maxim Health Information Services (MHIS) provides superior quality [coding and auditing services](#) to healthcare organizations across the country. MHIS offers on-site coding support, remote coding services, auditing and review services, education and training, HIM outsourcing solutions, and services to the Department of Veterans Affairs' Medical Centers. MHIS provides qualified healthcare professionals to customers to meet their needs in an efficient and cost-effective manner. MHIS has some of the best [career opportunities](#) in the industry, with positions including on-site coding, remote coding, travel coding, auditing, and more.

Welcome to the July issue of Maxim Coding Corner<sup>SM</sup>! As a leader in the HIM industry, [Maxim Health Information Services](#) is committed to providing you with updates on coding-related topics that matter to you. This month, we are focusing on coding for laceration repairs. Read on below to learn more.

### Coding for Laceration Repairs

The most common procedures performed in the ER are laceration repairs. In this article, we will specifically be discussing laceration repair basics.

Wound repairs are classified into three types; simple, intermediate and complex. The CPT book, along with AMA's CPT Assistant and AHA Coding Clinic for HCPCS, contain definitions and information regarding each repair type.

**Simple repair codes 12001 - 12021** are used when the wound only involves the epidermis and/or dermis. The wound does not extend into the deeper subcutaneous tissues. The repair is a simple one layer closure and may be performed with the use of tissue adhesives, staples or suture material.

Effective Jan. 1, 2005, code G0168 wound closure using adhesives only, was changed to an APC status indicator of "N" and will no longer be paid separately. A simple repair reported with code only G0168 will not be reimbursed. The code for the simple repair is assigned from code range 12001-12018 and an additional code for the wound adhesive G0168 may also be assigned.

**Intermediate repair codes 12031 – 12057** are used when wound repair requires closure of the subcutaneous tissue beneath the dermis. Intermediate wound repair includes layered closure of the wound and also single layer closure of heavily contaminated wounds, requiring extensive removal of particulate matter.

If the deeper layers are closed with suture material and the superficial layer is closed with a tissue adhesive, you may assign two codes, one from code range 12031-12057 for the intermediate repair and G0168 for the use of the tissue adhesive.

**Complex repair codes 13100 – 13153** are used for the repair of wounds requiring more than layered closure. Complex repair may involve scar revision, extensive undermining, and placement of

stents or retention sutures. These codes also include the layered repair of lacerations that require debridement of the wound edges before the wound can be closed. A wound described as complicated or complex will not necessarily require a complex closure. A physician may label a repair as "complex," however, it must meet the criteria above for a complex repair code to be assigned.

**CPT instructions for wound repair:**

Wounds must be measured in and recorded in centimeters, whether curved, angular or stellate.

When multiple wounds are repaired, add together the lengths of those in the same classification (simple, intermediate and complex) and from all anatomic sites grouped together into the same code descriptor. Do not add lengths of repairs from different groupings of anatomic sites (exp., face and extremities). When more than one classification of wound is repaired, sequence the most complex repair code first and apply modifier 59 to the secondary procedures.

**Laceration Repair Examples:**

**Example 1:** A patient was the victim of a knife attack and has 5 lacerations. He has a 2 cm laceration to the scalp, a 3 cm laceration on the right thigh and two lacerations to the chest measuring 4 cm and 6 cm. There is also a 4 cm complicated laceration of the face.

The physician repairs the scalp with single layer closure. The wounds to the chest and thigh are deeper and require repair of the subcutaneous tissues and skin in a layered fashion. The facial laceration required extensive undermining and approximation was extremely difficult.

**Answer:** One simple repair was performed to the scalp measuring 2 cm, 12001. Two intermediate repairs to the chest and one of the thigh measuring a total of 13 cm, 12035. One complex repair to the face measuring 4 cm, 13132.

**Example 2:** An infant sustained a 1 cm laceration just above the eyebrow. The wound was cleaned and Dermabond was applied.

**Answer:** Assign code 12011. An additional code of G0168 may be assigned.

**To learn more about Maxim Health Information Services, visit us [online](#) or call 866-265-0589.**

Past issues of Maxim Coding Corner are available online! Visit [the Coding Corner page](#) on our Website to download Coding Corner issues you may have missed.



This [CoolerEmail](#) was delivered to you by Maxim Health Information Services. You can [take your email address off Maxim Health Information Services' email list](#), or [update your preferences and/or send comments to Maxim Health Information Services](#). If you request to be taken off Maxim Health Information Services' email list, Maxim Health Information Services will honor your request pursuant to [CoolerEmail's](#) permission-based email terms and conditions. Postal address: 25200 Chagrin Boulevard, Suite 109, Beachwood, OH 44124

Powered by [CoolerEmail](#)