

CODING GUIDANCE RELATING TO SYNTHETIC SKIN SUBSTITUTES

The ABA Coding Committee has developed the following coding guidance for skin substitute procedures that utilize synthetic skin substitutes.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) defines skin substitutes as a “category of biological and synthetic products” that are “applied to wounds to aid wound healing.” In January 2021, CMS created a new HCPCS code that could be reported by hospital outpatient departments to describe synthetic skin substitute products that are resorbable:

C1849 Skin substitute, synthetic, resorbable, per square centimeter:

According to the 2021 Medicare hospital outpatient final rule, CMS created HCPCS code C1849 to describe “any synthetic skin substitute product.” It is not specific to any single product, but the product must meet the definition of the HCPCS code descriptor. Therefore, hospital outpatient departments may report C1849 when billing for any synthetic resorbable skin substitute product.

The ABA recommends the following CPT codes for the application of biologic and synthetic skin substitutes in the hospital outpatient setting:

CPT CODE	DESCRIPTOR
15271	Application of skin substitute graft to trunk, arms, legs, total wound surface area up to 100 sq cm; first 25 sq cm or less wound surface area
15272	Application of skin substitute graft to trunk, arms, legs, total wound surface area up to 100 sq cm; each additional 25 sq cm wound surface area, or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15273	Application of skin substitute graft to trunk, arms, legs, total wound surface area > 100 sq cm; first 100 sq cm wound surface area, or 1% of body area of infants and children
15274	Application of skin substitute graft to trunk, arms, legs, total wound surface area > 100 sq cm; each additional 100 sq cm wound surface area, or part thereof, or each additional 1% of body area of infants and children or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15275	Application of skin substitute graft to face, scalp, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, feet, and/or multiple digits, total wound surface area up to 100 sq cm; first 25 sq cm or less wound surface area
15276	Application of skin substitute graft to face, scalp, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, feet, and/or multiple digits, total wound surface area up to 100 sq cm; each additional 25 sq cm wound surface area or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)
15277	Application of skin substitute graft to face, scalp, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, feet, and/or multiple digits, total wound surface area > 100 sq cm; first 100 sq cm wound surface area, or 1% of body area of infants and children
15278	Application of skin substitute graft to face, scalp, eyelids, mouth, neck, ears, orbits, genitalia, hands, feet, and/or multiple digits, total wound surface area > 100 sq cm; each additional 100 sq cm wound surface area, or part thereof, or each additional 1% of body area of infants and children, or part thereof (List separately in addition to code for primary procedure)

Synthetic skin substitutes of this type would include but not be limited to the following:

Restrata, Suprathel, Supra SDRM, PermeaDerm, SynPath dermal matrix, and MatriDerm. It is important to note that Q codes have not been assigned for all of these products.