

Root Operation: Alteration

In an effort to aid Health Information Management Coding and Medical Billing Professionals with ICD-10, the following training tip is provided with an educational intent.

With PCS coding, the third character defines the root operation, or the objective of the procedure. The root operation of alteration, third character value '0' for codes in the Medical Surgical Section, reports only those procedures that have the sole purpose of improving the cosmetic appearance of the body without treating any medical condition.

- **Definition of Alteration:** Modifying the natural anatomic structure of a body part without affecting the function of the body part.
- **Explanation:** Alteration should only be reporting for those procedures that have the sole purpose of improving the cosmetic appearance of the body without treating any medical condition.

Examples:

- Cosmetic bilateral breast augmentation with saline implants: 0H0V0JZ
*Because this is done for cosmetic purposes, the root operation is **alteration***
- Percutaneous endoscopic face lift: 0W024ZZ

Coding Clinic is the official resource and authority for ICD-10 coding rules and conventions.

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