

tNewYork-Presbyterian Community Health Plan

PROVIDER ALERT

-- October 2005

Pharyngitis

Current information from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) raise a significant concern regarding the overuse of antibiotics due to the rise in antibiotic resistance. Research shows that approximately one-third of the prescriptions for antibiotics written each year are inappropriate.

Please remember to perform a test for group A streptococcus (strep) prior to prescribing antibiotics for suspected cases of pharyngitis. Also, remember to code for these tests on your encounter or claim forms to assure that the services are being reported correctly.

As health professional, we strive to provide excellent care to our members. Please join forces with us to prevent the inappropriate use of antibiotics.

Codes to Identify Group A Streptococcus Tests:

DESCRIPTION	CPT Codes	LOINC
Antigen detection		
...by enzyme immunoassay	87430	6556-5, 6557-3, 6558-1, 6559-9, 18481-2, 31971-5
... by nucleic acid	87650-87652	5036-9
...by direct optical observation	87880	
...by throat culture	87081, 87070-87071	626-2, 11268-0, 11475-1, 17656-0

Well Adolescent Visits

Adolescence is a time of many physical and emotional changes. Preventive well care visits are critical during adolescence in order to identify potential problems early and to provide appropriate treatment. Please reach out to your adolescent members and encourage them to come in for a well care visit. Take this opportunity to address the following areas:

- BMI screening
- Assessment, counseling, or educating on nutrition and exercise
- Counseling or education on risk factors associated with sexual activity and preventive actions
- Assessment for depression
- Assessment, counseling or education regarding the risks of tobacco, alcohol and substance abuse

Physicians can play a key role in assuring that our adolescents navigate this period of their lives as smoothly as possible. Please take the time to communicate with your patients and document your efforts. Remember to submit your HCFA 1500s in order to qualify for the well incentive program.

Dental Visits

Please remember to encourage your pediatric members (and their parents) to obtain regular dental check-ups. Early dental care is key toward good dentition in later life. NYPCHP members are entitled to preventive care and basic restorative treatment.

Please partner with us in assuring that our members receive this very important preventive service. Should your patients have any questions regarding this benefit, contact Member Services at 1-800-261-4649.

If you have any questions you may call your Provider Representative or call the Provider Services Department at 212-297-5510.