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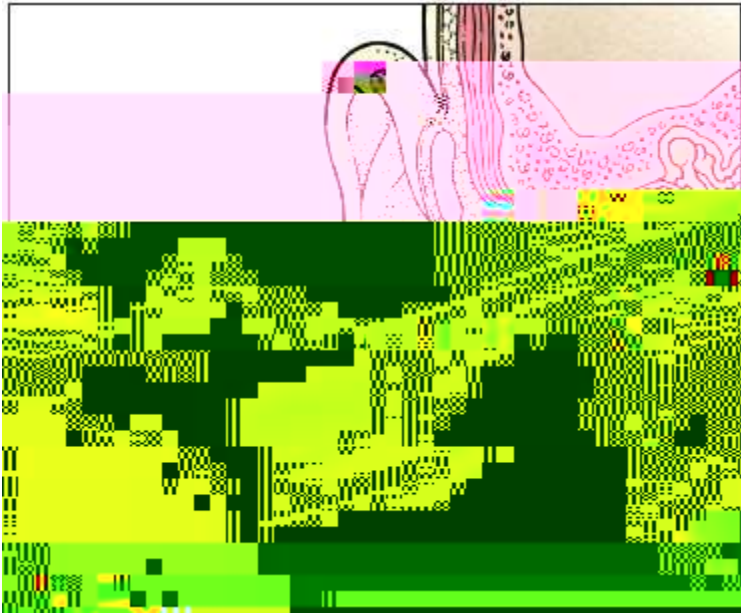
69210 Removal impacted cerumen requiring instrumentation, unilateral

(Do not report 69210 in conjunction with 69209 when performed on the same ear)

(For bilateral procedure, report 69210 with modifier 50)

(For removal of impacted cerumen achieved with irrigation and/or lavage but without instrumentation, use 69209)

Figure 1. Irrigating Water Into Ear With Syringe (Code 69209)



Code 69210 is reported when an instrumented approach is used for cerumen removal. The procedure must be performed by a physician or other qualified health care professional using instrumentation such as curettes, hooks, forceps, and suction to remove the impacted earwax.

Only one code (69209 or 69210) may be reported for the primary service provided on the same day on the same ear. Modifier 50, Bilateral Procedure, should be appended if either one of the cerumen removal procedures is performed on both ears.

Coding Tip

Codes 69209 and 69210 should not be reported together when both services are provided on the same day on the same ear.

The appropriate evaluation and management (E/M) code based upon category and site of service (eg, office or other outpatient, hospital care, nursing facility services) should be reported when nonimpacted cerumen is removed.

An E/M code may be reported if there is a separate and distinct service performed at the same session.

Clinical Example (69209)

A 7-year-old male comes in for his well-child examination. He fails his hearing screen in the left ear. On examination, the physician is unable to see the tympanic membrane due to cerumen impaction. An order is placed for the nurse to irrigate the ear.

Description of Procedure (69209)

The equipment, supplies, and patient are prepared. A special syringe tip adapter for ear irrigation or an adapter with butterfly tubing is placed at the end of a syringe containing lukewarm water or saline. A large sheet or drape is placed over the patient's clothing to prevent it from getting wet. The tip of the adapter is placed inside the patient's ear, and the water is pushed in gently to extrude

