

SCOPE OF REGIONAL LYMPH NODE SURGERY

Item Length: 1

Allowable Values: 0–7, 9

NAACCR Item #1292

Revised 01/04, 09/08, 02/10, 01/11, 01/12,
04/12, 01/13, 01/15**Description**

Identifies the removal, biopsy, or aspiration of regional lymph node(s) at the time of surgery of the primary site or during a separate surgical event.

Rationale

This data item can be used to compare and evaluate the extent of surgical treatment.

Instructions for Coding

- The scope of regional lymph node surgery is collected for each surgical event even if surgery of the primary site was not performed.
- Record surgical procedures which aspirate, biopsy, or remove regional lymph nodes in an effort to diagnose or stage disease in this data item. Record the date of this surgical procedure in data item *Date of First Course of Treatment* (NAACCR Item #1270) and/or *Date of First Surgical Procedure* (NAACCR Item #1200) if applicable.
- Codes 0–7 are hierarchical. If only one procedure can be recorded, code the procedure that is numerically higher.
- If two or more surgical procedures of regional lymph nodes are performed, the codes entered in the registry for each subsequent procedure must include the cumulative effect of all preceding procedures. For example, a sentinel lymph node biopsy followed by a regional lymph node dissection at a later time is coded 7. Do not rely on registry software to determine the cumulative code.
- For intracranial and central nervous system primaries (C70.0–C70.9, C71.0–C71.9, C72.0–C72.9, C75.1–C75.3), code 9.
- For lymphomas (M-9590-9726, 9728-9732, 9734-9740, 9750-9762, 9811-9831, 9940, 9948 and 9971) with a lymph node primary site (C77.0–C77.9), code 9.
- For an unknown or ill-defined primary site (C76.0–C76.8, C80.9) or for hematopoietic, reticuloendothelial, immunoproliferative, or myeloproliferative disease (C42.0, C42.1, C42.3, C42.4 or M-9727, 9733, 9741-9742, 9764-9809, 9832, 9840-9931, 9945-9946, 9950-9967, and 9975-9992), code 9.
- Do not code *distant* lymph nodes removed during surgery to the primary site for this data item. Distant nodes are coded in the data field *Surgical Procedure/Other Site* (NAACCR Item #1294).
- Refer to the current *AJCC Cancer Staging Manual* for site-specific identification of regional lymph nodes.
- If the procedure coded in this item was provided to prolong a patient's life by controlling symptoms, to alleviate pain, or to make the patient more comfortable, then also record this surgery in the item *Palliative Care* (NAACCR Item #3270).

Note: One important use of registry data is the tracking of treatment patterns over time. In order to compare contemporary treatment with previously published treatment based on former codes, or to data unmodified from pre-1998 definitions, the ability to differentiate surgeries in which four or more regional lymph nodes are removed is desirable. However, it is *very important* to note that the distinction between codes 4 and 5 is made to permit comparison of current surgical procedures with procedures coded in the past when the removal of fewer than 4 lymph nodes was not reflected in surgery codes. *It is not intended to reflect clinical significance* when applied to a particular surgical procedure. It is important to *avoid inferring, by data presentation or other methods, that one category is preferable to another within the intent of these items.*

Codes and Labels

The following instructions should be applied to all surgically treated cases for all types of cancers. The treatment of breast and skin cancer is where the distinction between sentinel lymph node biopsies (SLNBx) and more extensive dissection of regional lymph nodes is most frequently encountered. For all other sites, non-sentinel regional node dissections are typical, and codes 2, 6 and 7 are infrequently used.

Code	Label	General Instructions Applying to All Sites	Additional Notes Specific to Breast (C50.x)
		Use the operative report as the primary source document to determine whether the operative procedure was a sentinel lymph node biopsy (SLNBx), or a more extensive dissection of regional lymph nodes, or a combination of both SLNBx and regional lymph node dissection. The operative report will designate the surgeon's planned procedure as well as a description of the procedure that was actually performed. The pathology report may be used to complement the information appearing in the operative report, but the operative report takes precedence when attempting to distinguish between SLNBx and regional lymph node dissection or a combination of these two procedures. Do not use the number of lymph nodes removed and pathologically examined as the sole means of distinguishing between a SLNBx and a regional lymph node dissection.	Use the operative report as the primary source document to determine whether the operative procedure was a sentinel lymph node biopsy (SLNBx), an axillary node dissection (ALND), or a combination of both SLNBx and ALND. The operative report will designate the surgeon's planned procedure as well as a description of the procedure that was actually performed. The pathology report may be used to complement the information appearing in the operative report, but the operative report takes precedence when attempting to distinguish between SLNBx and ALND, or a combination of these two procedures. Do not use the number of lymph nodes removed and pathologically examined as the sole means of distinguishing between a SLNBx and a ALND.
0	No regional lymph node surgery	No regional lymph node surgery.	
1	Biopsy or aspiration of regional lymph node(s)	Review the operative report to confirm whether an excisional biopsy or aspiration of regional lymph nodes was actually performed. If additional procedures were performed on the lymph nodes, use the appropriate code 2-7.	Excisional biopsy or aspiration of regional lymph nodes for breast cancer is uncommon. Review the operative report of to confirm whether an excisional biopsy or aspiration of regional lymph nodes was actually performed; it is highly possible that the procedure is a SLNBx (code 2) instead. If additional procedures were performed on the lymph nodes, such as axillary lymph node dissection, use the appropriate code 2-7.
2	Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operative report states that a SLNBx was performed. Code 2 SLNBx when the operative report describes a procedure using injection of a dye, radio label, or combination to identify a lymph node (possibly more than one) for removal/examination. When a SLNBx is performed, additional non-sentinel nodes can be taken during the same operative procedure. These additional non-sentinel nodes may be discovered by the pathologist or selectively removed (or harvested) as part of the SLNBx procedure by the surgeon. Code this as a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a relatively large number of lymph nodes, more than 5, are pathologically examined, review the operative report to confirm the procedure was limited to a SLNBx and did not include an axillary lymph node dissection (ALND). Infrequently, a SLNBx is attempted and the patient fails to map (i.e. no sentinel lymph nodes are identified by the dye and/or radio label injection) and no sentinel nodes are removed. Review the operative report to confirm that an axillary incision was made and a node exploration was conducted. Patients undergoing

		SLNBx (code 2). If review of the operative report confirms that a regional lymph node dissection followed the SLNBx, code these cases as 6.	SLNBx who fail to map will often undergo ALND. Code these cases as 2 if no ALND was performed, or 6 when ALND was performed during the same operative event. Enter the appropriate number of nodes examined and positive in the data items <i>Regional Lymph Nodes Examined</i> (NAACCR Item #830) and <i>Regional Lymph Nodes Positive</i> (NAACCR Item #820).
3	Number of regional lymph nodes removed unknown or not stated; regional lymph nodes removed, NOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operative report states that a regional lymph node dissection was performed (a SLNBx was not done during this procedure or in a prior procedure). Code 3 (Number of regional lymph nodes removed unknown, not stated; regional lymph nodes removed, NOS). Check the operative report to ensure this procedure is not a SLNBx only (code 2), or a SLNBx with a regional lymph node dissection (code 6 or 7). Code 4 (1-3 regional lymph nodes removed) should be used infrequently. Review the operative report to ensure the procedure was not a SLNBx only. Code 5 (4 or more regional lymph nodes removed). If a relatively small number of nodes was examined pathologically, review the operative report to confirm the procedure was not a SLNBx only (code 2). If a relatively large number of nodes was examined pathologically, review the operative report to confirm that there was not a SLNBx in addition to a more extensive regional lymph node dissection during the same, or separate, procedure (code 6 or 7). Infrequently, a SNLBx is attempted and the patient fails to map (i.e. no sentinel lymph nodes are identified by the dye and/or radio label injection). When mapping fails, surgeons usually perform a more extensive dissection of regional lymph nodes. Code these cases as 2 if no further dissection of regional lymph nodes was undertaken, or 6 when regional lymph nodes were dissected during the same operative event. 	Generally, ALND removes at least 7-9 nodes. However, it is possible for these procedures to remove or harvest fewer nodes. Review the operative report to confirm that there was not a SLNBx in addition to a more extensive regional lymph node dissection during the same procedure (code 6 or 7).
4	1-3 regional lymph nodes removed		
5	4 or more regional lymph nodes removed		
6	Sentinel node biopsy and code 3, 4, or 5 at same time, or timing not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNLBx and regional lymph node dissection (code 3, 4, or 5) during the same surgical event, or timing not known Generally, SLNBx followed by a regional lymph node completion will yield a relatively large number of nodes. However it is possible for these procedures to harvest only a few nodes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, SLNBx followed by ALND will yield a minimum of 7-9 nodes. However it is possible for these procedures to harvest fewer (or more) nodes. If relatively few nodes are pathologically examined, review the operative report to confirm whether the procedure was limited to a

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If relatively few nodes are pathologically examined, review the operative report to confirm whether the procedure was limited to a SLNBx only. Infrequently, a SNLBx is attempted and the patient fails to map (i.e. no sentinel lymph nodes are identified by the dye and/or radio label injection.) When mapping fails, the surgeon usually performs a more extensive dissection of regional lymph nodes. Code these cases as 6. 	SLNBx, or whether a SLNBx plus an ALND was performed.
7	Sentinel node biopsy and code 3, 4, or 5 at different times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNLBx and regional lymph node dissection (code 3, 4, or 5) in separate surgical events. Generally, SLNBx followed by regional lymph node completion will yield a relatively large number of nodes. However, it is possible for these procedures to harvest only a few nodes. If relatively few nodes are pathologically examined, review the operative report to confirm whether the procedure was limited to a SLNBx only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, SLNBx followed by ALND will yield a minimum of 7-9 nodes. However, it is possible for these procedures to harvest fewer (or more) nodes. If relatively few nodes are pathologically examined, review the operative report to confirm whether the procedure was limited to a SLNBx only, or whether a SLNBx plus an ALND was performed.
9	Unknown or not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The status of regional lymph node evaluation should be known for surgically-treated cases (i.e., cases coded 19-90 in the data item <i>Surgery of Primary Site</i> [NAACCR Item #1290]). Review surgically treated cases coded 9 in <i>Scope of Regional Lymph Node Surgery</i> to confirm the code. 	

Examples

Code	Reason
0	No effort was made to locate sentinel lymph nodes, and no nodes were found in pathologic analysis.
2	(C50.1-Breast) There was an attempt at sentinel lymph node dissection, but no lymph nodes were found in the pathological specimen.
1	(C14.0-Pharynx) Aspiration of regional lymph node to confirm histology of widely metastatic disease.
2	(C44.5-Skin of Back) Patient has melanoma of the back. A sentinel lymph node dissection was done with the removal of one lymph node. This node was negative for disease.
3	(C61.9-Prostate) Bilateral pelvic lymph node dissection for prostate cancer.
6	(C50.3-Breast) Sentinel lymph node biopsy (SLNBx) of right axilla, followed by right axillary lymph node dissection (ALND) during the same surgical event.
7	(50.4-Breast) Sentinel lymph node biopsy (SLNBx) of left axilla, followed in a second procedure 5 days later by a left axillary lymph node dissection (ALND).
9	(C34.9-Lung) Patient was admitted for radiation therapy following surgery for lung cancer. There is no documentation on the extent of lymph node surgery in patient record.