



Western Australian Coding Rule

0716/10 Vascularised lymph node transfer

WA Coding Rule 0216/03 *Vascularised lymph node transfer* is superseded by ACCD Coding Rule ***Vascularised Lymph Node Transfer*** (Ref No: Q3049) effective 1 July 2016; (log in to view on the [ACCD CLIP portal](#)).

DECISION

WA Coding Rule 0216/03 *Vascularised lymph node transfer* is retired.

[Effective 1 Jul 2016, ICD-10-AM/ACHI/ACS 9th Ed.]



Western Australian Coding Rule

0216/03 Vascularised lymph node transfer

Q.

What procedure code should be assigned for vascularised lymph node transfer? In these cases the PD was 'Right arm lymphoedema – post axillary node clearance for breast cancer'.

A.

Vascularised lymph node transfer is a procedure where carefully selected lymph nodes are removed from another part of the body and transferred to the limb with lymphoedema. Depending upon whether the upper or lower extremity is affected, the lymph nodes may be transferred to the axilla or the groin, although sometimes they are transferred to the wrist or ankle.

Once the lymph nodes are transferred, the blood vessels that supply them are reattached to blood vessels in their new location. This keeps the lymph nodes alive and allows them to reintegrate into the body and help restore a properly functioning lymphatic system. This may help to drain excess fluid from the limb.

The most common donor site for lymph nodes is the groin, and the procedure will leave a scar that can be hidden beneath underwear or a bathing suit. A patch of skin may be transferred with the lymph nodes so that their viability can be monitored postoperatively. The surgery will last approximately four to six hours and is performed in the hospital under general anaesthesia.

Vascularised lymph node transfer can also be performed in conjunction with perforator flap breast reconstruction. In this situation the lymph nodes are transferred as part of the flap, but two separate blood supplies are connected, one for the flap and one for the lymph nodes. No more incisions are required than would have been done as part of the breast reconstruction.

There is no ACHI code for vascularised lymph node transfer. Two codes should be assigned to reflect all components of this procedure:

45562-00 [1674] *Noninnervated free flap*
90283-00 [812] *Other procedures on lymphatic structures*

The principal diagnosis should be assigned based on the documentation in the medical record. It may be documented as lymphoedema, post procedural lymphoedema or postmastectomy lymphoedema syndrome. If documentation is unclear or the coder believes that a more specific diagnosis is present but not documented, the case should be queried with the treating clinician.

DECISION

Vascularised lymph node transfer should be coded to 45562-00 [1674] *Noninnervated free flap* and 90286-00 [812] *Other procedures on lymphatic structure*.

[Effective 03 Feb 2016, ICD-10-AM/ACHI/ACS 9th Ed.]