

Low Anterior Resection With Colostomy

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On behalf of the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons Healthcare Economics Committee

QUESTION

How do you code for a low anterior resection (LAR) with colostomy but without anastomosis, just rectal closure (Hartmann's procedure)?

ANSWER

- Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) code 44143 is for colon resection without anastomosis, and colostomy (Hartmann's procedure) is not permitted with a partial rectal resection (LAR) below the peritoneal reflection.
- CPT 44146 (open approach) or CPT 44208 (laparoscopic/robotic approach) LAR without anastomosis, with colostomy.
- Because an anastomosis was not done, a 52 Modifier should be appended to CPT 44146 to indicate a reduced service with colostomy but without anastomosis.

DISCLAIMER

Your question was answered to the best of our ability using currently available legitimate resources. These include but are not limited to CPT Codes, International Classification of Diseases–Tenth Edition (ICD-10), Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System, and Diagnosis-Related Groups (DRG), as well as common hospital billing practices.

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COMMON RESOURCES

- CPT 2023 Professional Edition, pages 366–370.
- American Medical Association (AMA) Relative Value Unit Update Committee (RUC): <https://www.ama-assn.org/about/rvs-update-committee-ruc/rvs-update-committee-ruc>.
- AMA RUC Database 2024, version 1.2.
- CMS National Correct Coding Initiative Edits: <https://www.cms.gov/national-correct-coding-initiative-ncci>.
- AMS CPT: <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/cpt>.
- CMS Physician Fee Schedule: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/payment/fee-schedules/physician>.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ICD-10: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd/icd-10-cm/index.html>.
- American College of Surgeons Frequently Asked Questions About CPT Coding: <https://www.facs.org/for-medical-professionals/news-publications/news-and-articles/bulletin/2024/november-december-2024-volume-109-issue-10/frequently-asked-questions-about-cpt-coding/>.

Submit coding and billing questions to: dcr4codingcorner@gmail.com

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