

URS BILLING SERVICES, LLC

September 2010

Medical E-Newsletter



Headlines:

* *Exercise Helps Ease Arthritis Pain and Stiffness*- "Exercise is crucial for people with arthritis. It increases strength and flexibility, reduces joint pain, and helps combat fatigue." WebMD.com

* *New Rheumatoid Arthritis Criteria to Stave Off Disabling Disease for Thousands of People*- "American College of Rheumatology (ACR) and the European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR)...They replace existing ACR criteria published in 1987, which focused on established, rather than early indicators of disease...If picked up early, synthetic and biological disease modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs) can prevent the destructive and disabling joint damage, which is a hallmark of late stage RA." ScienceDaily.com

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The Importance of DTRs
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Gout...A convoluted disease

A couple definitions to preface the health issue at hand:

• **Arthritis**- Arthritis is inflammation of a joint. Symptoms of arthritis may include pain, swelling, redness, warmth, and limitation of movement.

Definitions provided by WebMD & MayoClinic

• **Uric Acid**- Uric acid is a waste product that results from normal body processes and is also found in some foods. Normally, the kidneys eliminate uric acid from the body in urine. Your body produces uric acid when it breaks down purines as well as in certain foods, such as organ meats, anchovies, herring, asparagus and mushrooms.

What is Gout?

Gout is a type of arthritis, which causes a sudden burning pain and stiffness in the joint. Over time, this pain tends to harm the tendons unless treated.

What causes Gout?

Uric acid is the main culprit for having gout. Gout develops when the uric acid forms crystal like shapes in and around the joint.

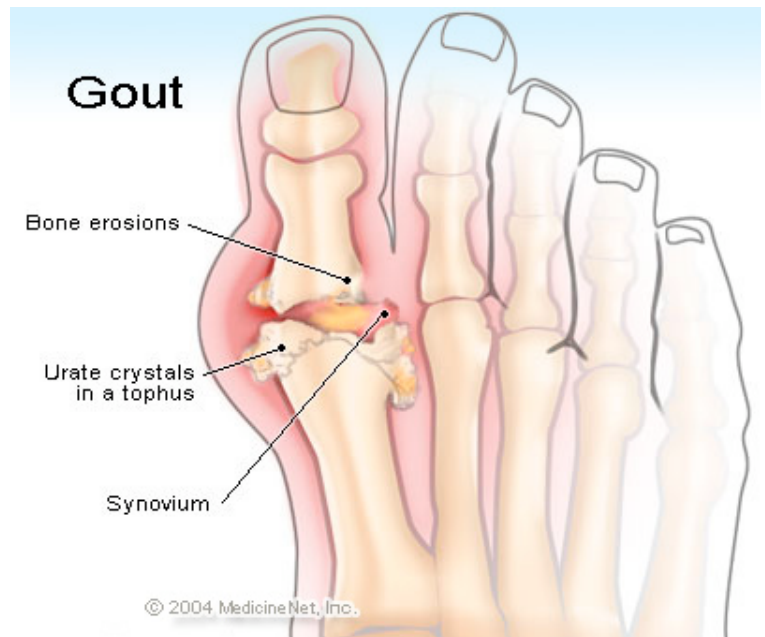
What are the symptoms?

The most common area gout attacks is the big toe where the crystals form and irritate the joint causing extreme pain and discomfort. Other joints that are commonly affected include the ankles, knees, wrists, fingers, and elbows. A common symptom is severe tenderness; even the feel of a blanket can cause extreme pain. In rare cases an attack can last for weeks, normally, however they last for a few days either treated or untreated with medication.

How is it treated?

Prevention of gout attacks is as vital as the treatment. Prevention is done through weight loss, drinking plenty of fluids, reducing alcohol consumption, dietary changes and medications to reduce the uric acid level in the blood.

Treatment involves prescription or over-the-counter medication that prevents or reduces inflammation of the attacked area.



Special Feature

The Importance of DTRs

By: Richard Tamburello

In this issue of E-URS Newsletter, I will focus on why establishing 'Delinquency Tolerance Ratio's' (DTR's) is one key success factor by which to minimize the practice's investment in A/R. DTR's should be set-up for all major insurance providers, including self-pay accounts. Implementing strict guidelines help to ensure that your practice not only minimize its investment in A/R but produce optimal cash revenues on a consistent basis.

As a general rule, we use the following DTR ratio targets for managing our clients A/R. These ratios are to be used as target guidelines for insurance and self-pay balances:

< 30 days = 75% - 80%, < 60 = 10%, < 91 = 5%, < 121= 5%, > 120 = 5%.

For example, the first and most important part of effectively managing and receiving payment is making sure ALL patient demographics, including insurance data, are correctly entered and verified prior to submitting claims. At URS, the staff is trained and tested, trained and tested when it comes to this essential 'key' phase of medical billing. Consider the negative financial consequences when carelessness replaces accuracy. In the next issue, I'll show ways to motivate staffs for achieving accuracy.

The Coding Corner

Networking with Coders

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) "is a worldwide professional association for health informatics... to advance professional practices and standards."

The AHIMA has provided information for coders in order to connect in their local community for networking, information and resources. Here are a few ways to connect with your local coding community.

1. Local/Regional Coding Roundtables- local access is provided to professional education, networking and representation.

2. Online Coding Community of Practice- [Communities of Practice \(CoP\)](#) is an online tool members use to reach out to each other to network, share, problem solve, and stay informed on the latest trends in all HIM related topics.

3. Find a Mentor- find a mentor and connect to advance and grow your skills.

4. Social Networking- connecting online via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), etc are simple ways to find other coding professionals.

Source: www.ahima.org

Q & A

Q: *Patient: Why did I get a bill? My insurance was supposed to pay??*

A: There are 3 common reasons why a patient will receive a bill:

1. Coordination of benefits (COB) haven't been updated, which need to be updated at least once per year
2. Patients don't realize they have a co-insurance or deductible
3. Patient's policy excludes certain benefits, ex: certain vaccines

Please direct questions, comments or desired topics for future discussion to info@e-urs.com!