The 1993 CPT Book lists two new codes specific to rhinoplasty for deformities secondary to cleft lip and cleft palate. Of interest is the ASPRS proposal for these codes was first rejected in 1991. Only after resubmission to the AMA CPT Editorial Panel with combined support of ASMS, the Cleft Palate/Craniofacial Association, and the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery were the new codes accepted. Through this “team effort,” codes were created that reflect the rising complexity and difficulty of cleft lip rhinoplasty procedures.

The codes are straightforward and relatively easy to use (see table). For cleft lip rhinoplasty to reposition the tip and create symmetry, without the need for septoplasty or bony work, one should use code 30460. If a columellar lengthening is also performed, it’s not coded separately, as it’s included in the global code 30460.

CPT convention calls for tissue grafts obtained through the same operative site to be included in the global procedure code. As such, if a septal cartilage tip graft is performed, it’s included in the global code 30460. If, however, conchal cartilage is used for tip grafting, it’s coded in addition, since it’s obtained through a separate incision:

- **30460 Cleft lip rhinoplasty, tip**
- **21235-51 Conchal cartilage graft**

If a cleft lip rhinoplasty is performed in which the asymmetric tip is repositioned, the nasal dorsum straightened, and a septoplasty is performed, use code 30462. Do not code separately for septoplasty (30520), as it’s included in the global procedure code 30462.

If a cranial bone graft is used in a cleft lip rhinoplasty, one should code:

- **30462 Cleft lip rhinoplasty, tip, septum, osteotomies.**
- **21210-51 Cranial bone graft to nose (includes obtaining graft).**

If a rhinoplasty has already been performed and one is operating on the nose secondarily, one should use the secondary rhinoplasty codes (30430, 30435, 30450). These take into account the fact that the tissues have already undergone surgery and may be altered, absent, or more fibrotic. See the CPT Corner of August 1991 for specifics regarding secondary rhinoplasty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30460</td>
<td>Cleft lip rhinoplasty, including columellar lengthening; tip only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30462</td>
<td>Cleft lip rhinoplasty, including columellar lengthening; tip, septum, osteotomies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21210</td>
<td>Bone graft to nose (includes obtaining graft).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21230</td>
<td>Rib cartilage graft to nose (includes obtaining graft).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21235</td>
<td>Ear cartilage graft to nose (includes obtaining graft).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Code of the Month
A septorhinoplasty for cleft lip nasal deformity is performed on an 18-year-old who has had no previous nasal surgery. A costochondral graft is used to augment the dorsum. A revision of the cleft lip repair corrects vermillion notching and an asymmetric Cupid’s bow.

Diagnoses:
754.0 Congenital nasal/septal deformity
478.1 Nasal airway obstruction
709.2 Scar

Procedures:
30462 Cleft lip rhinoplasty; tip, septum, osteotomies.
21230-51 Rib cartilage graft to nose (includes obtaining graft).
40720-51 Revision of cleft lip.

The cleft lip rhinoplasty code is global, including tip, bone work, and septal surgery. Since the rib graft is harvested through a separate operative site, it’s coded separately. The cleft lip rhinoplasty codes do not include surgery on the lip, so the revision is coded separately.

Dr. Janevicius is the Society’s representative to the AMA CPT Advisory Committee.