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## Documentation Dissection

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**PREOPERATIVE DIAGNOSIS:** Pericardial effusion

**POSTOPERATIVE DIAGNOSIS:** Pericardial effusion <sup>[1]</sup>

**COMPLICATIONS:** None

**CONDITION:** Stable

**OPERATIVE FINDINGS:** Large purulent pericardial effusion <sup>[1]</sup>, sent for Gram stain, culture, and cytology

**PROCEDURE:** With the patient under general anesthesia and endotracheal intubation, after a radial arterial line was placed, the patient was positioned and prepped and draped in a sterile manner. A subxiphoid incision was made with dissection to the linea alba, which was incised <sup>[2]</sup>. The pericardium was grasped and incised <sup>[3]</sup>, and upon incision of the pericardium, purulence emanated from the pericardial sac under pressure. This was evacuated <sup>[4]</sup> and sent for Gram stain and culture. A window of pericardium was excised and a portion sent for culture and permanent section. <sup>[5]</sup> Additional cytology was sent from the remaining pericardial effluent. A chest tube was placed, the incision closed in layers. <sup>[6]</sup> The patient tolerated the procedure well. All counts were correct.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Diagnosis indicates pericardial effusion.

<sup>[2]</sup> A subxiphoid incision was made with dissection to the linea alba, which was incised.

<sup>[3]</sup> The pericardium was grasped and incised.

<sup>[4]</sup> Upon incision of the pericardium, purulence emanated from the pericardial sac under pressure, which was evacuated.

<sup>[5]</sup> A window of pericardium was excised and a portion sent for culture and permanent section.

<sup>[6]</sup> A chest tube was placed, the incision closed in layers.

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What are the CPT® and ICD-10-CM codes reported?

**CPT® Code:** 33025

**ICD-10-CM Code:** I31.39

**Rationales:**

**CPT®:** The pericardial window procedure was performed to resolve pericardial effusion.

Based on our identified key elements a code selection will be made from the Pericardium category of CPT®. The note documents a pericardial window procedure. The CPT® Index look for Pericardial Window/Creation/for drainage 32659, 33025. Due to the operative note not specifying the procedure as a surgical thoracoscopy (Video-assisted thoracic surgery [VATS]), the appropriate code selection is 33025 *Creation of pericardial window or partial resection for drainage*.

**ICD-10-CM:** The postoperative diagnosis documents pericardial effusion. In the ICD-10-CM Alphabetic Index look for Effusion/pericardium, pericardial referring you to I31.39. Verify in the Tabular List.