

# Documenting and Coding Tips: Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

## Medicare Advantage

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is considered the third leading cause of death in the U.S. with nearly 15.7 million Americans (6.4%) currently diagnosed with COPD. Cigarette smoking is the most significant determinant of development and progression of COPD.<sup>1,2</sup> More than 50% of adults with low pulmonary function are not aware that they have COPD.<sup>3</sup>

In ICD-10-CM, COPD is an umbrella term that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema and chronic asthma. Specific ICD-10-CM codes are available to allow for clear delineation of the condition as either uncomplicated or in acute exacerbation. Performing pulmonary function tests (PFTs) such as a screening spirometry is recommended on all individuals with the following:<sup>4</sup>

- History of tobacco dependence (Z87.891), or exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z77.22)
- History of chronic cough, bronchitis or asthma (Z87.09)
- Family history of asthma and other chronic lower respiratory diseases (Z82.5), or other respiratory diseases (Z83.6)
- Tobacco dependence (F17.-), or use (Z72.0)

ICD-10-CM	Description	HCC
J41.0	Simple chronic bronchitis (smokers' cough)	111
J44.0*	COPD with acute lower respiratory infection	111
J44.1*	COPD with (acute) exacerbation	111
J44.9*	COPD, unspecified	111
J96.1-	Chronic respiratory failure • 0=unspecified, 1=with hypoxia, 2=with hypercapnia	84
J96.2-	Acute and chronic respiratory failure • 0=unspecified, 1=with hypoxia, 2=with hypercapnia	84
R05	Cough	Not a HCC
Z99.81	Dependence on supplemental (long-term) oxygen	Not a HCC
J45.-**	Asthma (mild, moderate, severe; intermittent or persistent); acute exacerbation or status asthmaticus	Not a HCC

\* Includes COPD, chronic obstructive asthma, chronic asthmatic bronchitis, chronic obstructive bronchitis and chronic bronchitis with emphysema.

\* If the patient has COPD or other disease such as cystic fibrosis or a lung injury, document also:

- If the patient is on oxygen (Z99.81)
- If the patient has chronic respiratory failure (**J96.10**)

\*\* If patients have COPD with asthmatic conditions, document and code both the COPD and type of asthma.

### ➔ When documenting COPD, specify:

**Type:** For example, asthma with COPD – also document the asthma by severity, frequency and level of exacerbation; chronic asthmatic bronchitis, chronic obstructive bronchitis, chronic bronchitis with emphysema, and chronic obstructive tracheobronchitis

**Severity:** Acute exacerbation, acute-on-chronic exacerbation or chronic respiratory failure

**Co-morbidities that can complicate COPD:** Such as but not limited to pulmonary artery disease, malnutrition, diabetes, cardiac disease, hypertension, heart failure, coronary artery disease (CAD) and lung cancer

**Infection:** Any lower acute lower respiratory infection and the infectious agent, if known

**Cause:** Identify any additional lung disease due to external agent and specify agent (for example, organic dust, chemical, gases, fumes, vapors, ventilation system, etc.)

**Tobacco use/Exposure:** Any related tobacco use, abuse, dependence, past history, or exposure (second hand, occupational, etc.)

Consider reviewing Optum tools related to coexisting conditions such as diabetes, hypertension and malnutrition, if applicable.

Per the ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY 2021: "A dash (-) at the end of an alphabetic index entry indicates that additional characters are required. Even if a dash is not included at the alphabetic index entry, it is necessary to refer to the tabular list to verify that no 7th character is required." The bolding of the ICD-10-CM codes represents categories, subcategories or codes that map to the CMS-HCC risk adjustment model for payment year 2021. cms.gov/Medicare/Health-Plans/MedicareAdvtgSpecRateStats/Risk-Adjustors.

The following references were used to create this document:

Optum360 ICD-10-CM: Professional for Physicians 2021. Salt Lake City: 2020.

1. World Health Organization. Global Strategy for the Diagnosis, Management, and Prevention of COPD. 2006 Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease. [http://who.int/respiratory/copd/GOLD\\_WR\\_06.pdf](http://who.int/respiratory/copd/GOLD_WR_06.pdf). Published 2006. Accessed December 8, 2020.
2. World Health Organization. Chronic respiratory diseases: COPD Definition. WHO. <http://who.int/respiratory/copd/definition/en/>. Published 2018. Accessed December 8, 2020.
3. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [cdc.gov/copd/basics-about.html](https://www.cdc.gov/copd/basics-about.html). Published June 5, 2018.
4. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. Screening for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Using Spirometry: United States Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. *Ann In Med* 148: 529-534 (2008).