

Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases

Chronic lower respiratory diseases must be documented and coded specifically for patients.

Chronic Bronchitis

Documentation

- ▶ Acute or Chronic
 - Further identify chronic bronchitis as obstructive, if appropriate
- ▶ Chronic indicates cough with mucus most days of the month, for at least three months.

Coding Tips

- ▶ Chronic bronchitis not specified as “obstructive” should be coded with J41.0 - J42. Chronic bronchitis that is specified as obstructive is coded to category J44.

Chronic Bronchitis Codes	
Description	Code
Simple chronic bronchitis	J41.0
Mucopurulent chronic bronchitis	J41.1
Mixed simple and mucopurulent chronic bronchitis	J41.8
Unspecified chronic bronchitis	J42

Emphysema

Coding Tips

- ▶ When COPD and emphysema are both documented, code J43 – Emphysema, as emphysema is considered more specific.

Emphysema Codes	
Description	Code
Unilateral pulmonary emphysema	J43.0
Panlobular emphysema	J43.1
Centrilobular emphysema	J43.2
Other emphysema	J43.8
Emphysema, unspecified	J43.9

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For additional information, go to:
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COPD: Other Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Documentation

- ▶ Include COPD diagnostics (such as chest CT, PFTs, spirometry) and treatments (inhalers, nebulizers, O2) in your documentation.
- ▶ When an infection is present, document the type of infection (bronchitis, pneumonia, etc), as well as the infectious agent (Klebsiella pneumoniae, MRSA, etc).
- ▶ If a COPD exacerbation is present, document it.

Coding Tips

When the physician reports chronic obstructive asthma or chronic asthmatic bronchitis, and the type of asthma is specified, report a code from J44 and J45.

J44.0 – Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with (acute) lower respiratory infection

- ▶ An additional code should be assigned to report the infection.

J44.1 – Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation

- ▶ A COPD exacerbation cannot be assumed unless specifically documented by the provider.
- ▶ If COPD with a lower respiratory tract infection (J44.0) and exacerbation of the condition (J44.1) are present, code both. Follow this by coding for the specific lower respiratory infection.

J44.9 – Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, unspecified

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