When selecting International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10), diagnostic codes, accuracy is important when describing the patient's true health. A joint effort between the healthcare provider and the coder/biller is essential to achieve complete and accurate documentation, code assignment, and reporting of diagnoses and procedures.

COPD is often coded inaccurately. Many billers/coders/providers are missing opportunities to show which patients are sicker and are at a higher risk. Coding COPD requires a solid understanding of the ICD-10 coding guidelines to ensure accurate code assignment.

These diagnosis codes are also used in determining the eligible population for various quality measures.

ICD-10 Categories J40-J47: Tips on How to Code Using ICD-10 Codes

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is often used to describe the following conditions:
  - Emphysema   • Chronic Bronchitis   • Obstructive Asthma

- COPD is defined as a condition in which there is chronic obstruction to airflow due to chronic bronchitis and/or emphysema.

- When coding diagnoses of COPD, chronic bronchitis, acute bronchitis, chronic asthmatic bronchitis, acute asthmatic bronchitis, emphysema, etc., it's important to understand the coding implications of the presence of two or more of these conditions, and whether the condition is acute, chronic, or in acute exacerbation.

- While COPD is a chronic condition, it is common for patients to experience an acute exacerbation (acute on chronic event) of COPD. This is defined as a **sudden** experience of worsening symptoms.

- When coding emphysema, COPD, bronchitis, and obstructive asthma, an additional code should be used to identify any exposure to tobacco smoke, history of tobacco use, tobacco dependence, or current tobacco use, where applicable.

- To properly code bronchitis in ICD-10, it is important to recognize the way the bronchitis is described (e.g., acute, chronic, etc.) and if it is related to another COPD diagnosis (e.g., with emphysema or with obstructive asthma.)

- If the condition is not documented as chronic, then ***bronchitis not specified as acute or chronic*** is the correct code to assign.

- Code category J40* describes ***Bronchitis, not specified as acute or chronic.*** Note: Code Category J40* includes:
  - Bronchitis NOS (not otherwise specified)   • Bronchitis with tracheitis NOS   • Catarrhal bronchitis   • Tracheobronchitis NOS

- Code category J41* describes *simple* and *mucopurulent chronic* bronchitis. The codes in this category are as follows:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J41.0	**Simple** chronic bronchitis
J41.1	Mucopurulent chronic bronchitis
J41.8	Mixed simple and mucopurulent chronic bronchitis

- Code category J42 describes *unspecified chronic* bronchitis. Note: Code Category J42* also includes:
  - Chronic bronchitis NOS   • Chronic tracheitis   • Chronic tracheobronchitis

- To properly code for emphysema in ICD-10, it is important to recognize how the emphysema is documented, and if it is complicated by being stated as chronic or paired with another comorbidity such as chronic bronchitis.

- Code category J43* describes *Emphysema*. The codes in this category are as follows:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J43.0	Unilateral pulmonary emphysema (MacLeod's syndrome)
J43.1	Panlobular emphysema
J43.2	Centrilobular emphysema
J43.8	Other emphysema
J43.9	Emphysema, unspecified

Note: ICD-10 Diagnosis code J43.9 also includes the following:
- Bullous emphysema (lung)(pulmonary)
- Emphysema (lung)(pulmonary)NOS
- Emphysematous bleb
- Vesicular emphysema (lung)(pulmonary)

▶ Code category J44* describes other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The codes in this category are as follows:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J44.0	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with acute lower respiratory infection
J44.1	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation
J44.9	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, unspecified

Note: Code Category J44* also includes the following:
- Asthma with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Chronic asthmatic (obstructive) bronchitis
- Chronic bronchitis with airways obstruction
- Chronic obstructive asthma
- Chronic bronchitis with emphysema
- Chronic emphysematous bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive tracheobronchitis
- Chronic obstructive bronchitis

▶ Choosing the correct diagnosis codes for asthma requires different known factors for ICD-10. The code selection is first based on how the asthma is described: mild intermittent, mild persistent, moderate persistent, severe persistent, or unspecified. Within each of the choices are options for uncomplicated, exacerbated, or with status asthmaticus.

▶ Code category J45* describes *Asthma*. The codes in this category are as follows:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J45.20	Mild intermittent asthma uncomplicated (includes: Mild intermittent asthma NOS)
J45.21	Mild intermittent asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.22	Mild intermittent asthma with status asthmaticus
J45.30	Mild persistent asthma, uncomplicated (includes: Mild persistent asthma NOS)
J45.31	Mild persistent asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.32	Mild persistent asthma with status asthmaticus
J45.40	Moderate persistent asthma, uncomplicated (includes: Moderate persistent asthma NOS)
J45.41	Moderate persistent asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.42	Moderate persistent with status asthmaticus
J45.50	Severe persistent asthma, uncomplicated
J45.51	Severe persistent asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.52	Severe persistent asthma with status asthmaticus
J45.901	Unspecified asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.902	Unspecified asthma with status asthmaticus
J45.909	Unspecified asthma, uncomplicated (includes: Asthma NOS)
J45.998	Other asthma

Note: Code Category J45* also includes the following:
- Allergic (predominately) asthma
- Allergic bronchitis NOS
- Allergic rhinitis with asthma
- Atopic asthma
- Extrinsic allergic asthma
- Hay fever with asthma
- Idiosyncratic asthma
- Intrinsic nonallergic asthma
- Nonallergic asthma

▶ Code category J47* describes *Bronchiectasis*. The codes in this category are as follows:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J47.0	Bronchiectasis with acute lower respiratory infection
J47.1	Bronchiectasis with (acute) exacerbation
J47.9	Bronchiectasis, uncomplicated

Note: Code Category J47* also includes:
- Bronchiolectasis

Assigning Chronic lower respiratory disease (COPD) codes and associated conditions:

▶ When coding emphysema, COPD, bronchitis, and obstructive asthma, an additional code should be used to identify any exposure to tobacco smoke, history of tobacco use, tobacco dependence, or current tobacco use where applicable.

Example: *A patient with a history of tobacco use is seen in the office. Mild centrilobular emphysema is identified on the chest CT.* Below is the correct code assignment for this patient's condition:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J43.2	Centrilobular emphysema
Z87.891	History of tobacco use

▶ Symptoms that are an integral part of the primary diagnosis should NOT be coded:

Example: *A patient has increasing shortness of breath, weakness and ineffective cough. Treatment included oxygen therapy and advice for smoking cessation. Patient is experiencing acute respiratory insufficiency due to acute exacerbation of COPD and tobacco dependence.* Below is the correct code assignment for this patient's condition:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J44.1	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation
F17.200	Nicotine dependence, unspecified, uncomplicated
Z71.6	Tobacco abuse counseling

▶ The documentation should always be clear in the medical record and all the guidelines found in the ICD-10 book should be followed. Exclusions and inclusions for the code set should always be referred to when choosing diagnosis codes.

Example: *The physician documented the following diagnoses for this elderly patient: COPD with emphysema.* Below is the correct code assignment for this patient's condition:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J43.9	Emphysema, unspecified

Note: There is an exclusion note under J44* (COPD) for emphysema without chronic bronchitis. The code for emphysema **includes** the COPD, so these should not be added as two separate codes.

▶ You should use as many codes as necessary to correctly describe all of the complications and associated conditions that are documented in the medical record.

Example: *Patient is seen with exacerbation of COPD and acute bronchitis.* Below is the correct code assignment for this patient's condition:

ICD-10 Diagnosis Code	ICD-10 Description
J44.0	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with acute lower respiratory infection
J20.9	Acute bronchitis, unspecified
J44.1	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation

Note: Code J44.0 includes a note that says "use additional code to identify infection." The infection has been identified as acute bronchitis (J20.9) so this code should be added in addition to the others.

Note: In this document [*] indicates an additional character(s) is required. Codes for chronic lower respiratory diseases (COPD) are located in the ICD-10 book under the chronic lower respiratory codes J40-J47. Once the correct code is located in the Alphabetical Index, you should continue to the Tabular List of Diseases to confirm diagnosis assignment. Guidelines for coding chronic lower respiratory diseases (COPD) can be found in the ICD-10 Coding Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting 2016

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