

Documentation and Reporting Asthma

DOCUMENTATION TIPS

Accurate documentation of asthma identifies the frequency and severity of attacks, including any exacerbation or status asthmaticus. The provider should address and document specifically the elements that support the level of severity that correlates to the clinical situation:

- **Frequency** – intermittent or persistent
- **Severity** – mild, moderate, severe
- Complication or exacerbation

Document clinical indicators in the absence of an asthma diagnosis:

- Wheezing, especially when exhaling,
- Shortness of breath,
- Excessive coughing,
- Difficulty breathing,
- Chest tightness or pain.

Asthma (not an all-inclusive list)

ICD-10-CM Codes	Description
J45.20	Mild intermittent asthma, uncomplicated
J45.21	Mild intermittent asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.22	Mild intermittent asthma with status asthmaticus
J45.30	Mild persistent asthma, uncomplicated
J45.31	Mild persistent asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.32	Mild persistent asthma with status asthmaticus
J45.40	Moderate persistent asthma, uncomplicated
J45.41	Moderate persistent asthma with (acute) exacerbation
J45.42	Moderate persistent asthma 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 <i>Asthmatic bronchitis, NOS</i> <i>Childhood asthmas, NOS</i> <i>Late onset asthma</i>

ICD-10-CM Codes	Description
J45.990	Exercise induced bronchospasm
J45.991	Cough variant asthma
J45.998	Other asthma

Documentation of **chronic obstructive asthma** is reported with ICD-10-CM diagnosis code J44.9 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. **Eosinophilic asthma** should be reported with ICD-10-CM diagnosis code J82.83 as well as the correct diagnosis code for asthma by type and severity.

Document and report the patient's:

- Exposure to tobacco smoke
- History of tobacco dependence
- Tobacco dependence
- Tobacco use

Report long-term drug therapy with a code from category Z79 for medications used regularly. Do not report this diagnosis code for rescue medications prescribed on an as needed basis (PRN).

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING EXAMPLE

Patient reports wheezing, excessive coughing, difficulty breathing several times a week.

Impression: Mild intermittent asthma, continue albuterol inhaler daily.

J45.20 Mild intermittent asthma, uncomplicated

Z79.899 Other long-term (current) drug therapy



HEDIS: Detailed information about measures related to asthma medication is available through your Passport/Molina Quality Representative.

According to the ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY2022: "A dash (-) at the end of an alphabetic index entry indicates that additional characters are required." Refer to the tabular list to identify the appropriate character(s) that will complete the diagnosis code.

1. ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY2022. 1 Oct. 2021. www.cms.gov/files/document/fy-2022-icd-10-cm-coding-guidelines.pdf. Accessed 30 Nov. 2021.
2. 2022 ACDIS Pocket Guide: The Essential CDI Resource. Brentwood, TN, HCPRO, 2021.