

Chronic Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in ICD-10-CM

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Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

is a type of obstructive lung disease characterized by chronically poor airflow.

The main symptoms include shortness of breath, cough and sputum. Tobacco smoking is the most common cause of COPD, with a number of other factors such as air pollution and genetics playing a smaller role.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) may be found in the ICD-10-CM Index under:

- Main term - Disease
- Sub term - Pulmonary or Sub term - Lung
- More specific sub term - Chronic obstructive

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) may be reported as:

- chronic obstructive (unspecified) J44.9
- with acute bronchitis J44.0
- with exacerbation (acute) J44.1
- with lower respiratory infection (acute) J44.0
- decompensated J44.1
- with exacerbation (acute) J44.1

Confusingly, in ICD-10-CM, if patient has COPD with acute exacerbation (J44.1) and acute bronchitis (J44.0) – three codes would be required;

- One for the COPD with acute exacerbation,
- One for the COPD with acute bronchitis,
- And a code for the acute bronchitis, J20.9

Rationale for three codes:

- Both codes J44.0 and J20.9 are necessary to correctly code the acute bronchitis with COPD.
 - Under code J44.0 there is a note: “Use additional code to identify the infection.”
 - J20.9 is added to identify the infection, acute
- Code J44.1 is added as an additional code to identify the COPD exacerbation.

Exercise 1: Patient admitted to the hospital with Exacerbation of COPD with Acute Bronchitis

Step 1: Locate each term in the Alphabetic Index:

Main term:
Disease, diseased
Lung
obstructive (chronic) J44.9
with
acute
bronchitis **J44.0**
exacerbation NEC **J44.1**

Main term:
Bronchitis
Acute or subacute (with
bronchospasm or obstruction)
J20.9

Step 2: Verify the code selected in the Tabular List:

- J44.0 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with acute lower respiratory infection
Use additional code to identify the infection
- J20.9 Acute bronchitis, unspecified
Excludes2: acute bronchitis with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (J44.0)
- J44.1 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation
Excludes2: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] with acute bronchitis (J44.0)

Excludes notes (reminder):

ICD-10-CM has two types of excludes notes. Each note has a different definition for use but they are both similar in that they indicate that codes excluded from each other are independent of each other.

- A type 1 Excludes note is a pure excludes note. It means “Not Coded Here!” An Excludes note indicated that the code excluded should never be used at the same time as the code above the Excludes1 note. An Excludes 1 is used when two conditions cannot occur together, such as a congenital form versus an acquired form of the same condition.
- A type 2 Excludes note represents, “Not included here”. An Excludes2 note indicates that the condition excluded is not part of the condition represented by the code, but a patient may have both conditions at the same time. When an Excludes 2 noted appears under a code, it is acceptable to use both the code and the excluded code together, when appropriate.

Exercise 1: Patient admitted to the hospital with Exacerbation of COPD with Acute Bronchitis

Answer:
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

Chronic Pulmonary Disease (COPD) with Asthma in ICD-10-CM

Asthma is a common chronic inflammatory disease of the airways characterized by variable and recurring symptoms, reversible airflow obstruction and bronchospasm. Common symptoms include wheezing, coughing, chest tightness, and shortness of breath. Asthma is thought to be caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

Asthma described as obstructive or diagnosed in conjunction with COPD is classified to category J44, Other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Exercise 2: Patient admitted with COPD with asthma

Step 1: Locate each term in the Alphabetic Index:

Main term:
Disease, diseased
Lung
obstructive (chronic) **J44.9**

Main term:
Asthma, asthmatic
(bronchial) (catarrh) (spasmodic)
J45.909

In ICD-10-CM in the Tabular, one of the notes under category J44 states:

- **Code also** type of asthma, if applicable (J45.-)

Step 2: Verify the code selected in the Tabular List:

- J44.9 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, unspecified
J45.909 Unspecified asthma, uncomplicated

Exercise 2: Patient admitted with COPD with asthma

Answer:
J44.9 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, unspecified
J45.909 Unspecified asthma, uncomplicated

Exercise 3: Patient admitted to the hospital with moderate persistent asthma in acute exacerbation with acute exacerbation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Step 1: Locate each term in the Alphabetic Index:

Main term:
Disease, diseased
Lung
obstructive (chronic) J44.9
with
acute
bronchitis **J44.0**
exacerbation **NEC J44.1**

Main term:
Asthma, asthmatic (bronchial)
(catarrh) (spasmodic) J45.909
Persistent
moderate J45.40
with
exacerbation (acute) **J45.41**
status asthmaticus J45.32

Step 2: Verify the code selected in the Tabular List:

- J44.1 Chronic obstruction pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation
Excludes2 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] with acute bronchitis (J44.0)
- J45.41 Moderate persistent asthma with (acute) exacerbation

Exercise 3: Patient admitted to the hospital with moderate persistent asthma in acute exacerbation with acute exacerbation of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Answer:
J44.1 Chronic obstruction pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation
J45.41 Moderate persistent asthma with (acute) exacerbation

Remember the ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting:

Use both the Alphabetic Index and the Tabular List when locating and assigning a code. Reliance on only the Alphabetic Index or the Tabular List leads to errors in code assignments and less specificity in the code selection.

Locate the term in the Alphabetic Index and verify the code selected in the Tabular List.

Read and be guided by instructional notations that appear in both the Alphabetic Index and the Tabular List.

Final Note: Please use the documentation provided in the medical record as well as the index and tabular in the ICD-10-CM code book to guide your code choice.