

# ICD-9-CM Code Updates

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Transitions are associated with each season of the year. “Spring fever” brings to mind flowers, warmer weather, and outside activities after months of “cabin fever” during the winter. Summer brings sunshine and family vacations, while autumn means back to school, fall jackets, football, and...new diagnosis codes.

Not all of the 2010 diagnosis code or code descriptor changes that went into effect Oct. 1, 2009, relate to oncology, but some significant new codes were added to charge tickets, electronic medical records, and charge description masters.

## Tumor Lysis Syndrome

Tumor lysis syndrome develops when cytotoxic therapies cause the destruction of a large number of rapidly dividing malignant cells. In the past, codes were assigned for each symptom of tumor lysis. Effective Oct. 1, 2009, a single code describes this condition:

- 277.88: Tumor lysis syndrome.

In addition to the code for tumor lysis, an appropriate E-code, such as E933.1 (drugs, medicinal, and biological substances causing adverse effects in therapeutic use, antineoplastic, and immunosuppressive drugs), should be reported to further describe the patient’s medical condition.

## Antineoplastic Chemotherapy Induced Anemia

Over the years medical coders have often debated the appropriate code(s) to report anemia resulting from chemotherapy drug administration. Effective Oct. 1, 2009, report the following code for anemia that develops in response to chemotherapy administration:

- 285.3: Antineoplastic chemotherapy induced anemia.

The exception would be if the patient has developed *aplastic* anemia (a form

of anemia in which the capacity of the bone marrow to generate red blood cells is defective) caused by the administration of chemotherapy. This condition would be reported with the following diagnosis code:

- 284.89: Other specified aplastic anemia.

As in the case of tumor lysis syndrome, the appropriate E-code is reported in addition to the code for anemia to designate the nature of the drug that caused this condition. The ICD-9-CM Official Guidelines state that encounters for management of an anemia associated with chemotherapy or immunotherapy, where the only treatment is for the anemia, should list first the code for the anemia and code E933.1, followed by the diagnosis code for the site of the malignancy.

## Merkel Cell Carcinoma

Prior to Oct. 1, 2009, there were no specific codes for Merkel cell carcinoma, a neuroendocrine cancer of the skin. Instead, the ICD-9-CM Alphabetic Index stated to code this condition by referring to the Neoplasm Table, by site, malignant column. Effective Oct. 1, specific codes were created for Merkel cell carcinoma. Primary Merkel cell carcinoma is reported with codes:

- 209.31: Merkel cell carcinoma, face
- 209.32: Merkel cell carcinoma, scalp and neck
- 209.33: Merkel cell carcinoma, upper limb
- 209.34: Merkel cell carcinoma, lower limb
- 209.35: Merkel cell carcinoma, trunk
- 209.36: Merkel cell carcinoma, other sites.

The “other sites” code 209.36 includes Merkel cell carcinoma of the buttock, genitals, or any other anatomic area not defined by the

more specific codes.

There is also a unique code to report a metastatic Merkel cell malignancy: 209.75: secondary neuroendocrine malignancy, Merkel cell. The ICD-9-CM Tabular List indicates that this code includes secondary Merkel cell carcinoma that presents in the nodes, visceral metastatic presentation, or any secondary site.

Finally, ICD-9-CM has added a diagnosis code to report personal history of a malignant neuroendocrine tumor, including personal history of Merkel cell carcinoma: V10.91: secondary neuroendocrine tumors.

In addition to codes for primary neuroendocrine cancers, here is a new set of codes for secondary (metastatic) neuroendocrine malignancies:

- 209.70: Secondary neuroendocrine malignancy, unspecified site
- 209.71: Secondary neuroendocrine malignancy, distant lymph nodes
- 209.72: Secondary neuroendocrine malignancy, liver
- 209.73: Secondary neuroendocrine malignancy, bone
- 209.74: Secondary neuroendocrine malignancy, peritoneum
- 209.79: Secondary neuroendocrine malignancy, other sites.

## Unspecified Nature, Retina and Choroid

A patient may have a suspicious area on the retina that requires ongoing observation, but not necessarily a biopsy. The new diagnosis code for these retinal spots is:

- 239.81: Neoplasms of unspecified nature, retina and choroid.

Cross-references added to the Tabular List of ICD-9-CM indicate that this code is reported for a dark area on the retina or for a retinal freckle.

As of Oct. 1, code 239.8: neoplasm of unspecified nature of other specified sites is *no longer effective*.



### Pre-Operative and/or Pre-Procedural Examination

In some circumstances, the code itself has not changed, but the code descriptor has been altered. Patients who receive certain chemotherapy drugs require monitoring of the effects of these substances. For example, a MUGA scan may be performed prior to the first dose of chemotherapy to establish baseline cardiac function, rule out a pre-existing cardiac disease, and clear the patient to receive a cardiotoxic drug. Effective Oct. 1, 2009, the Tabular List of ICD-9-CM specifically states that the following code includes “Examination prior to chemotherapy”:

- V72.83: Other specified pre-operative examination.

In addition to this descriptor change, there is a new code to report blood tests prior to a treatment or procedure:

- V72.63: Pre-procedural laboratory examination.

Specifically, this code is reported when routine blood testing is performed for a patient with no underlying signs, symptoms, or conditions present to justify the service.

### Signs and Symptoms Codes

Another code with an altered coding instruction is:

- 790.01: Precipitous drop in hematocrit.

In addition to the traditional code descriptor relating to hematocrit level, this code may now also be reported for a “drop in hemoglobin” recorded as a laboratory result.

### A Time to Review

The annual update to ICD-9-CM diagnosis codes provides an opportunity to review existing code capture documents and programs. In addition to the new codes and verbiage changes listed in this article, there are

**Table 1. New Diagnosis Codes for Oncology\***

Diagnosis Code	Description
209.31	Merkel cell carcinoma of the face
209.32	Merkel cell carcinoma of the scalp and neck
209.33	Merkel cell carcinoma of the upper limb
209.34	Merkel cell carcinoma of the lower limb
209.35	Merkel cell carcinoma of the trunk
209.36	Merkel cell carcinoma of other sites
209.70	Secondary neuroendocrine tumor, unspecified site
209.71	Secondary neuroendocrine tumor of distant lymph nodes
209.72	Secondary neuroendocrine tumor of liver
209.73	Secondary neuroendocrine tumor of bone
209.74	Secondary neuroendocrine tumor of peritoneum
209.75	Secondary Merkel cell carcinoma
209.79	Secondary neuroendocrine tumor of other sites
239.81	Neoplasms of unspecified nature, retina and choroid
239.89	Neoplasms of unspecified nature, other specified sites
277.88	Tumor lysis syndrome
279.41	Autoimmune lymphoproliferative syndrome
279.49	Autoimmune disease, not elsewhere classified
285.3	Antineoplastic chemotherapy induced anemia
V10.90	Personal history of unspecified malignant neoplasm
V10.91	Personal history of malignant neuroendocrine tumor
V72.63	Pre-procedural laboratory examination
V87.43	Personal history of estrogen therapy
V87.46	Personal history of immunosuppressive therapy

\*Effective October 1, 2009

many other alterations to “Includes” and “Excludes” notes, clarifying verbiage and descriptor changes that became effective Oct. 1, 2009. This updated reporting information is essential for obtaining medical necessity information, capturing patient diagnoses for research purposes, and tracking patient care. 📄

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### Resources

- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid. New, Deleted, and Revised ICD-9-CM Codes: Summary Tables. Available online at: [www.cms.hhs.gov/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/07\\_summarytables.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/ICD9ProviderDiagnosticCodes/07_summarytables.asp#TopOfPage). Last accessed Sept. 14, 2009.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Clarification of Diseases, Functioning, and Disability. Available online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/icd.htm>. Last accessed Sept. 14, 2009.