

# Tip Sheet: Locating ICD-10-CM Codes

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# Locating the ICD-10-CM Code

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## Step-By-Step Instructions

1. Find the documented diagnosis
2. Determine the main term
3. Look up the main term in the Index to Diseases and Injuries (Alphabetic Index)
4. Find the code in the Tabular List
5. Review all conventions and notes associated with the code



# Main Term

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The main term is the disease, illness, or condition of the patient.

To determine the main term, review the medical record and ask the following questions:

- △ What is the disease?
- △ What is the illness?
- △ What is the symptom?



# Main Term

There may be additional descriptive terms that affect code selection. For example, there are [essential modifiers](#), such as chronic or acute. Review all subterms to determine the most specific code.

Diagnosis: [Chronic](#) sinusitis

Main term: Sinusitis

Diagnosis: [Acute](#) tonsillitis

Main term: Tonsillitis

When looking for a code in the Alphabetic Index, you may not be able to find the exact words the provider has used in his documentation.

Let's use the diagnosis of right hip pain shown in the example below. To find this in the Alphabetic Index, look for the main term Pain(s). Under pain, there is not an entry for hip. To locate this diagnosis, the connection has to be made that the hip is a joint. Look for the subterm joint as a subcategory under the main term Pain(s). Pain(s)/joint/hip directs you to the code selection to verify in the Tabular List.



Diagnosis: Right hip pain

Main term: Pain(s)

## Tip:

When trying to determine the main term, it is sometimes helpful to read the diagnosis right to left.



For example, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) can be found by looking in the ICD-10-CM Alphabetic Index under Disease/pulmonary/chronic obstructive

- + Disease, diseased - see also Syndrome
  - + absorbent system I87.8
  - + acid-peptic K30
  - + pulmonary - see also Disease, lung
    - + artery I28.9 
    - + chronic obstructive J44.9 

### 10. Diseases of the respiratory system (J00-J99)

#### J40-J47 Chronic lower respiratory diseases (J40-J47)

#### J44 Other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

 J44.9 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, unspecified 

# Locating the ICD-10-CM Code: Main Term

Diagnosis: Acute Bronchitis  
Main Term: Bronchitis



## **Bronchiolitis** – *continued*

respiratory, interstitial lung disease J84.115

## **Bronchitis** (diffuse) (fibrinous) (hypostatic)

(infective) (membranous) J40

with

influenza, flu, or grippé - see Influenza, with,  
respiratory manifestations NEC

obstruction (airway) (lung) J44.9

tracheitis (15 years of age and above) J40

acute or subacute J20.9

chronic J42

under 15 years of age J20.9

acute or subacute (with bronchospasm or  
obstruction) J20.9

with

bronchiectasis J47.0

chronic obstructive pulmonary disease J44.0

Look up the main term in the  
Index to Diseases and Injuries  
(Alphabetic Index)

# Locating the ICD-10-CM Code: Essential Modifier

Diagnosis: Acute Bronchitis

Main Term: Bronchitis

Look for the **essential modifier/subterm: “acute”**

## **Bronchiolitis** – *continued*

respiratory, interstitial lung disease J84.115

## **Bronchitis** (diffuse) (fibrinous) (hypostatic)

(infective) (membranous) J40

with

influenza, flu, or grippe - see Influenza, with,  
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acute or subacute (with bronchospasm or  
obstruction) J20.9

with

bronchiectasis J47.0

chronic obstructive pulmonary disease J44.0

# Locating the ICD-10-CM Code: Tabular List

Note the INCLUDES, EXCLUDES1 and EXCLUDES2 notes associated with category J20.

The INCLUDES notes give examples of the codes or content in the category.

The EXCLUDES1 notes are pure exclusion notes. EXCLUDES1 means “NOT CODED HERE!” and happens when 2 codes cannot exist or occur together.

EXCLUDES2 is slightly different. EXCLUDES2 means “not included here”. The patient may have both conditions at the same time.

## √4<sup>th</sup> J20 Acute Bronchitis

### INCLUDES

*acute and subacute bronchitis (with) bronchospasm*  
*acute and subacute bronchitis (with) tracheitis*  
*acute and subacute bronchitis (with) tracheobronchitis, acute*  
*acute and subacute fibrinous bronchitis*  
*acute and subacute membranous bronchitis*  
*acute and subacute purulent bronchitis*  
*acute and subacute septic bronchitis*

### EXCLUDES1

*bronchitis NOS (J40)*  
*tracheobronchitis NOS (J40)*

### EXCLUDES2

*acute bronchitis with bronchiectasis (J47.0)*  
*acute bronchitis with chronic obstructive asthma (J44.0)*  
*acute bronchitis with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (J44.0)*  
*allergic bronchitis NOS (J45.909-)*  
*bronchitis due to chemicals, fumes and vapors (J68.0)*  
*chronic bronchitis NOS (J42)*  
*chronic mucopurulent bronchitis (J41.1)*  
*chronic obstructive bronchitis (J44.-)*  
*chronic obstructive tracheobronchitis (J44.-)*  
*chronic simple bronchitis (J41.0)*  
*chronic tracheobronchitis (J42)*

J20.9 Acute bronchitis, unspecified



# Practice Question 1

What is the ICD-10-CM code for swine flu?

Remember to ask:

- ⚡ What is the disease?
- ⚡ What is the illness?
- ⚡ What is the symptom?

## Practice Question 1

What is the ICD-10-CM code for **swine flu**?

Remember to ask:

- ⚡ What is the **disease**?
- ⚡ What is the **illness**?
- ⚡ What is the symptom?

**Swine** is an **essential** modifier

Look in the ICD-10-CM Alphabetic Index for Flu/swine.

*Verify code selection in the Tabular List.*

**ANSWER: J09.x2**

# Practice Question 2

What is the ICD-10-CM code for UTI?

Remember to ask:

- ⚡ What is the disease?
- ⚡ What is the illness?
- ⚡ What is the symptom?

## Practice Question 2

What is the ICD-10-CM code for **UTI**?

Remember to ask:

- ⚡ What is the disease?
- ⚡ What is the **illness**?
- ⚡ What is the symptom?

UTI stands for urinary tract infection.

Look in the ICD-10-CM Alphabetic Index for Infection/urinary (tract) N39.0.

Verify code selection in the Tabular List. **There is an instructional note use additional code to identify organism.** There is no information of the infectious agent and no additional code is reported.

# Practice Question 3

A 50-year-old female presents to her provider with symptoms of insomnia and upset stomach. The provider suspects she is premenopausal. She is diagnosed with impending menopause.

What diagnosis code(s) should be reported?

Remember to ask:

- ⚡ What is the disease?
- ⚡ What is the illness?
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### Practice Question 3

A 50-year-old female presents to her provider with symptoms of **insomnia and upset stomach**. The provider **suspects** she is **premenopausal**. She is diagnosed with **impending menopause**.

What diagnosis code(s) should be reported?

Remember to ask:

- ✦ What is the **disease**?
- ✦ What is the illness?
- ✦ What is the **symptom**?

Look in the Alphabetic Index for Impending. There is not a subterm for menopause; therefore, the symptoms are coded.

*ICD-10-CM guideline I.B.11 states to reference the ICD-10-CM Alphabetic Index to determine if the condition has a subentry for impending or threatened and reference main term entries for Impending and Threatened. If the subterms are listed, assign the given code. If the subterms are not listed, code the existing underlying condition(s) and not the condition described as impending or threatened.*

Look for Insomnia (organic) which directs the coder to G47.00. Next, look for Upset/stomach which directs the coder to K30.

*Verify code selection in the Tabular List.*

**ANSWER: G47.00, K30**

# Practice Question 4

A 10-month-old comes into the pediatrician's office for a harsh, bark-like cough. She is diagnosed with croup. The mother also wants the pediatrician to look at a rash that has developed on her leg. The pediatrician prescribes over the counter medication of acetaminophen for the croup and hydrocortisone cream for the rash on the leg. She is to follow up in five days or return earlier if the conditions worsen.

What ICD-10-CM code(s) should be reported for this visit?

Remember to ask:

- ⚡ What is the disease?
- ⚡ What is the illness?
- ⚡ What is the symptom?

## Practice Question 4

A 10-month-old comes into the pediatrician's office for a **harsh, bark-like cough**. She is diagnosed with **croup**. The mother also wants the pediatrician to look at a **rash** that has developed on her leg. The pediatrician prescribes over the counter medication of acetaminophen for the croup and hydrocortisone cream for the rash on the leg. She is to follow up in five days or return earlier if the conditions worsen. What ICD-10-CM code(s) should be reported for this visit?

Remember to ask:

- ✦ What is the disease?
- ✦ What is the **illness**?
- ✦ What is the **symptom**?

Look for Croup in the ICD-10-CM Alphabetic Index referring you to code J05.0.

*Signs and symptoms that are associated with a disease process should not be reported, refer to ICD-10-CM guideline I.B.5. ICD-10-CM code R05.9 is not reported because **cough is a symptom of croup**. Codes for signs and symptoms that are not routinely associated with a definitive diagnosis should be reported, according to ICD-10-CM guidelines 1.B.4 and I.B.5.*

Look for Rash in the Alphabetic Index referring you to code R21.

*Verify both codes in the Tabular List.*

**ANSWER: J05.0, R21**



# Practice Question 5

A 20-year-old comes into the emergency department (ED) with symptoms of a severe headache, vomiting, stiff neck, and fever. The ED physician suspects meningitis and performs a lumbar puncture. The ED physician reviews the results, and the patient is admitted in the hospital for meningitis which is suspected to be bacterial.

Which ICD-10-CM code(s) is/are reported by the ED physician?

Remember to ask:

- ⚡ What is the disease?
- ⚡ What is the illness?
- ⚡ What is the symptom?

## Practice Question 5

A 20-year-old comes into the emergency department (ED) with symptoms of a severe headache, vomiting, stiff neck, and fever. The ED physician suspects meningitis and performs a lumbar puncture. The ED physician reviews the results, and the patient is admitted in the hospital for meningitis which is suspected to be bacterial.

Which ICD-10-CM code(s) is/are reported by the ED physician?

Remember to ask:

- ^+ What is the disease?
- ^+ What is the illness?
- ^+ What is the symptom?

Look in the Alphabetic Index for Meningitis G03.9

*The symptoms for this scenario (headache, vomiting, stiff neck, and fever) are associated with meningitis (definitive diagnosis). ICD-10-CM guideline I.B.4 states signs and symptoms that are associated routinely with a disease process should not be assigned as additional codes. Per ICD-10-CM guidelines IV.D and II.H do not code a diagnosis documented as probable, suspected, questionable, rule out, or working diagnosis.*



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