

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

READER QUESTIONS: Code COPD Patients With Caution

Question: An established patient with chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD) with acute bronchitis reports to my physician for a scheduled spirometry. What is the proper diagnosis coding for this encounter?

Arizona Subscriber

Answer: Report a single diagnosis code for the patient's COPD when it occurs along with certain conditions, such as bronchitis, emphysema, or asthma. On the claim, report the following:

- 94010 (Spirometry, including graphic record, total and timed vital capacity, expiratory flow rate measurement[s], with or without maximal voluntary ventilation) for the spirometry
- 491.22 (Obstructive chronic bronchitis with acute bronchitis) for the COPD.

Explanation: You don't have to report 466.0 (Acute bronchitis) for the obstructive chronic bronchitis because the code descriptor for 491.22 specifies acute bronchitis. See Internal Medicine Coding Alert, Volume 12, No. 7, for more on this coding scenario.