

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

Reader Questions: Remember 5th Digit on New Migraine ICD-9s

Question: I am having trouble navigating the new ICD-9 codes for migraines. My encounter notes state that the internist treated a patient who had an "intractable basilar migraine with status migrainosus." I know the right diagnosis code is in ICD-9 2009, but which one is it?

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Answer: To represent the patient's migraine type, report 346.03 (Migraine with aura; with intractable migraine, so stated, with status migrainosus). ICD-9 2009 features upward of 30 new migraine codes -- so you must be a lot more specific

when choosing a diagnosis code for your migraine claims.

Base code: ICD-9 2009 calls for coders to use 346.0x (Migraine with aura) to represent basilar migraines. You should also use 346.0x for:

- classic migraine
- migraine preceded or accompanied by transient focal neurological phenomena
- migraine-triggered seizures
- migraine with acute-onset aura
- migraine with aura without headache (migraine equivalents)
- migraine with prolonged aura
- migraine with typical aura
- retinal migraine.

You'll also have to select a fifth digit for this code based on whether or not status migrainosus is present. With 346.0x, choose from these fifth-digit options:

- 0 -- without mention of intractable migraine without mention of status migrainosus
- 1 -- with intractable migraine, so stated, without mention of status migrainosus
- 2 -- without mention of intractable migraine with status migrainosus
- 3 -- with intractable migraine, so stated, with status migrainosus.