

## Internal Medicine Coding Alert

### Reader Questions: Origins of Blood Indicate Either 569.3 or 578.1

Question: I'm not sure when I should use 569.3 and 578.1 for bloody stool. Are they one and the same?

Nevada Subscriber

Answer: No. Your physician's documentation should indicate the source of the bleeding to allow you to choose the appropriate ICD-9 code.

Blood in the stool usually originates from somewhere in the upper areas of the gastrointestinal tract. In this case, you would use 578.1 (Blood in stool). On the other hand, traces of bright red blood on the outside of the stool or on the toilet tissue usually occur from a source within the rectum or anus (569.3, Hemorrhage of rectum and anus).