

Internal Medicine Coding Alert

You Be the Coder: Diagnosis Is Not Listed in ICD-9

Test your coding knowledge. Determine how you would code this situation before looking at the box below for the answer.

Question: How should I code reactive airway disease without coding asthma? I can't find a listing in the ICD-9 manual.

West Virginia Subscriber

Answer: Sometimes, you will not find a particular disease or condition such as reactive airway disease listed in the ICD-9 manual. In those cases, you need to know the underlying or precipitating cause of the condition to select the proper diagnosis code. Check the physician's documentation for notes about the cause of this disease. If the reactive airway disease is from acute bronchitis or bronchiolitis, then 466.x (Acute bronchitis and bronchiolitis) would be appropriate. This series includes bronchospasm. If the only symptom the doctor noted is wheezing, then you could use 786.07 (Wheezing). If the physician notes either allergic or asthmatic bronchitis, then you could use the code for asthma, unspecified (493.9x).