

Outpatient Facility Coding Alert

Reader Question: Code It Right For Laryngitis

Question: The provider diagnoses a patient with sore throat as having laryngitis. How do we code this?

Codify Subscriber

Answer: The answer will depend on what type of laryngitis the patient has. You should use J04.0 (Acute laryngitis) to report acute laryngitis without obstruction. ICD-10 also asks you to report an additional code (B95-B97) to identify the infectious agent responsible for the acute laryngitis.

Remember, until a test confirms a condition, you should use signs-and-symptoms diagnoses rather than the diagnosis code for the condition itself. Look to your physician's documentation to guide your code selection.

Coder tip: If the patient follows a treatment plan, he or she should have a quick recovery from acute laryngitis. If the patient's symptoms have not resolved after approximately three weeks, however, the physicians should evaluate the patient for chronic laryngitis. You should report J37.0 (Chronic laryngitis) for chronic laryngitis.