

MDS Alert

Resource: Here's a Quick Review of MDS Definitions & Coding Tips for Section K0500

The RAI User's Manual provides the following verbatim instructions for coding K0500D:

THERAPEUTIC DIET: A therapeutic diet is a diet intervention ordered by a health care practitioner as part of the treatment for a disease or clinical condition manifesting an altered nutritional status, to eliminate, decrease, or increase certain substances in the diet (e.g. sodium, potassium) (ADA, 2011).

MECHANICALLY ALTERED DIET: A diet specifically prepared to alter the texture or consistency of food to facilitate oral intake. Examples include soft solids, puréed foods, ground meat, and thickened liquids. A mechanically altered diet should not automatically be considered a therapeutic diet.

Enteral feeding formulas:

-- Should not be coded as a mechanically altered diet.

-- Should only be coded as K0500D, Therapeutic Diet when the enteral formula is altered to manage problematic health conditions, e.g. enteral formulas specific to diabetics.

Coding Tips for K0500D

Therapeutic diets are not defined by the content of what is provided or when it is served, but why the diet is required. Therapeutic diets provide the corresponding treatment that addresses a particular disease or clinical condition which is manifesting an altered nutritional status by providing the specific nutritional requirements to remedy the alteration.

A nutritional supplement (house supplement or packaged) given as part of the treatment for a disease or clinical condition manifesting an altered nutrition status, does not constitute a therapeutic diet, but may be part of a therapeutic diet. Therefore, supplements (whether given with, in-between, or instead of meals) are only coded in K0500D, Therapeutic Diet when they are being administered as part of a therapeutic diet to manage problematic health conditions (e.g. supplement for protein-calorie malnutrition).

Source: Excerpted verbatim from the RAI manual.