

New ICD-10 Codes for Corneal Dystrophy and Transplants

On Oct. 1, 2020, many new and revised ICD-10-CM codes went into effect, including the addition of laterality to the corneal dystrophy and corneal transplant codes.

Altogether, there are 80 changes that impact ophthalmology. Although many of the edits are minor, be sure you know what has changed (see “ICD-10 Resources”). Failure to submit a diagnosis code in its entirety will lead to claim rejection, causing a delay in payment.

Corneal Dystrophy: H18.5-

As previously, the fifth character of corneal dystrophy’s ICD-10 code (H18.5-) represents the type of dystrophy:

- H18.50- *Unspecified hereditary*
- H18.51- *Endothelial*
- H18.52- *Epithelial (juvenile)*
- H18.53- *Granular*
- H18.54- *Lattice*
- H18.55- *Macular*
- H18.59- *Other hereditary*

What’s new is that the sixth character now indicates laterality:

- 1 for the right eye
- 2 for the left eye
- 3 for both eyes

For example, a patient diagnosed with bilateral Fuchs dystrophy would be identified by H18.513.

Corneal Transplant: T86.84-

As previously, the sixth character of the ICD-10 code for a corneal transplant

(T86.84-) indicates type of transplant:

- T86.840- *Rejection*
- T86.841- *Failure*
- T86.842- *Infection*
- T86.848- *Other complication*
- T86.849- *Unspecified complication*

But now the seventh character indicates laterality—1, 2, or 3 to represent the right eye, left eye, or both eyes, respectively.

For example, T86.8421 indicates that a patient is diagnosed with a corneal transplant infection in the right eye.

Other Changes

Further changes that might be relevant to your practice include the following.

R51.-: Headache. If ICD-10 changes are giving you a headache, make sure that you are coding it correctly, as a fourth character has been added:

- R51.0 *Headache with orthostatic component, not elsewhere classified*
- R51.9 *Headache, unspecified*

H55.8-: Other irregular eye movements. There were two changes to the H55.8- family of codes:

- H55.81’s definition is now *Deficient saccadic eye movements* (previously, it had been *Saccadic eye movements*)
- H55.82 is a new code, defined as *Deficient smooth pursuit eye movements*

U07.-: Two new codes for 2020.

Released prior to October, the following codes may be applicable to some practices:

ICD-10 Resources

The American Academy of Ophthalmic Executives (AAOE) has developed a wealth of ICD-10 resources:

- *2021 ICD-10-CM for Ophthalmology: The Complete Reference* (aao.org/codingproducts)
- Free materials (aao.org/icd10), including subspecialty-specific guides and two new cornea decision trees
- Links to LCDs (aao.org/lcds)

- U07.0 *Vaping-related disorder*
- U07.1 *COVID-19*

Payer Readiness

While federal payers implemented these codes on Oct. 1 (apart from the two U07 codes, which were implemented earlier), others may be slower to adopt them. You should therefore:

- check payer policies, including Medicare Administrative Contractor local coverage determinations (LCDs), to see if they have been updated (see “ICD-10 Resources,” above); and
- make sure that you provide the new diagnosis code when seeking prior authorization.

What if a claim is denied as not medically necessary? This may mean that the ICD-10 code has not yet been uploaded or assigned a CPT code by that particular payer. Contact your provider representatives for a timeline and consider providing them with supporting documentation.

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