

INCREASE YOUR FAMILIARITY WITH Z-CODES

Correctly coding for active problems versus “history of” conditions or status codes can mean the difference between passing and failing an audit. The personal history codes are in categories Z85-Z99. In addition to personal history of neoplasms, endocrine disorders, mental health issues, circulatory conditions, digestive conditions, and musculoskeletal conditions, there are codes to report ostomy status, acquired absence of a limb, noncompliance, and presence of an artificial medical device. All of these codes are in the last chapter of the ICD-10 book titled, “Factors influencing health status in contact with health services.”

EXAMPLES (blue font indicates code risk adjusts):

Diagnostic Statement:	ICD-10 Code:
“History of breast cancer 2013”	Z85.3
“Prostate cancer, s/p prostatectomy, treatment completed 2015”	Z85.46
“Healed myocardial infarction”	I25.2
“Old PE (pulmonary embolism)”	Z86.711
“H/O stroke”	Z86.73
“Personal history of TBI (traumatic brain injury)”	Z87.820
“Acquired absence of left great toe”	Z89.412
“BKA (below-knee-amputation), R leg”	Z89.511
“Tracheostomy present”	Z93.3
“Colostomy status”	Z93.3
“Status post kidney transplant”	Z94.0
“Noncompliant with renal dialysis”	Z91.15
“Dependence on renal dialysis”	Z99.2

COMMON MISTAKES INCLUDE:

- Using a code as if the condition is current, when actually the “Personal History Of...” code should be used. The most common error is for cerebrovascular accident (stroke).
- Using a “...history of...” code for cancer when the patient is currently undergoing cancer treatment.
- Using a traumatic amputation code (beginning with S) when a code from Z89, “Acquired absence of a limb”, should be used.
- Omitting status codes entirely.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: *My patient is a breast cancer survivor, status post double mastectomy and taking Tamoxifen. Can I code the cancer as current, since she is under treatment, or should I code Z85.3 for the history for breast cancer?*

A: Since the patient is under treatment with Tamoxifen, choose a code from category C50, malignant neoplasm of breast. ICD-10 coding guidelines note that it is appropriate to code for “active cancer” **when the patient is undergoing treatment**, even if the malignancy has been excised.

Q: *I’m doing a hospital follow-up for my patient who had a stroke (cerebral infarct) a week ago. How do I code the stroke?*

A: Do not code from category I63 – these are for the initial (acute) episode of care. Instead use, *Personal history of transient ischemic attack (TIA), and cerebral infarction without residual deficits*. **If the patient has any residual deficits, a code from category I69, *Sequelae of cerebrovascular disease*, should be used instead.**

Q: *Is it appropriate to code from category S06, intracranial injury, for a patient I am seeing for late effects of a TBI years ago?*

A: Be sure to use the correct 7th character. For sequelae of injury, the ICD-10 index directs us to code to injury **with seventh character S**.