

Diabetes with Eye Complications

At Healthfirst, we are committed to helping providers accurately document and code their patients' health records. This tip sheet is intended to assist providers and coding staff with the documentation and ICD-10-CM selection on services submitted to Healthfirst—specifically for **Diabetes With Eye Complications**. It provides information from industry sources about proper coding practice. However, this document does not represent or guarantee that Healthfirst will cover and/or pay for the services outlined. Coverage decisions are based on the terms of the applicable evidence of coverage and the provider's participation agreement. This includes the determination of any amount that Healthfirst or the member owes the provider.

Diabetes With Eye Complications classification is mainly based on retinopathy, macular edema, and cataract.

ICD-10 Codes and Descriptions

Identify laterality based on the 7th character					
One of the following 7th characters is to be assigned to codes in subcategories E11.32, E11.33, E11.34, E11.35, and E11.37 to designate laterality of the disease:					
1	Right eye	E11.3212 - Type 2 DM with mild non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy with macular edema, left eye			
2	Left eye				
3	Bilateral	E 1 1	3 2	1	2
9	Unspecified	DM Category	Complication: Mild non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy	Further specification: With macular edema	Laterality: Left eye
Type 2 diabetes mellitus with unspecified diabetic retinopathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E11.311 with macular edema E11.319 without macular edema 					
Type 2 diabetes mellitus with mild non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E11.321* with macular edema E11.329* without macular edema 					
Type 2 diabetes mellitus with moderate non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E11.331* with macular edema E11.339* without macular edema 					

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Type 2 diabetes mellitus with severe non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E11.341* with macular edema E11.349* without macular edema
Type 2 diabetes mellitus with proliferative diabetic retinopathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E11.351* with macular edema E11.352* with traction retinal detachment involving the macula E11.353* with traction retinal detachment not involving the macula E11.354* with combined traction retinal detachment and rhegmatogenous retinal detachment E11.355* with stable proliferative diabetic retinopathy E11.359* without macular edema
Type 2 diabetes mellitus with diabetic cataract, E11.36
Type 2 diabetes mellitus with diabetic macular edema <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E11.37X* resolved following treatment
Type 2 diabetes mellitus with other diabetic ophthalmic complications, E11.39

* Additional 7th character required to specify laterality

Documentation Recommendations			
Updated Status of Condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently on medication “x”; currently stable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worsening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved
Identify type of eye diabetic complications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mild non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy Moderate non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy Severe non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy Proliferative diabetic retinopathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With Diabetic cataract With other diabetic ophthalmic complication Unspecified diabetic retinopathy 		
Associated Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With Macular Edema Without Macular Edema 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With Retinal Detachment 	
Eye Laterality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Left 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Right 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilateral
Specify Severity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mild 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe
Identify Risk Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poorly Controlled Diabetes High Blood Pressure High Cholesterol Smoking Pregnancy 		

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Documentation Recommendations	
Use Linking Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Due to,” “Secondary to” or “Associated with”
Treatment Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diabetes Management• Quitting smoking• Maintaining a healthy weight• Laser Treatment (Photocoagulation)• Anti-VEGF Injections• Steroid Injections• Vitrectomy

Coding Tips

- The type of diabetes mellitus should be clearly documented for each date of service; however, if the type of diabetes mellitus is not documented, the default ICD-10 diagnosis code is **E11.9** - Type 2 diabetes mellitus without complications.
- When coding diabetes mellitus, use as many codes from categories **E08*–E13*** as necessary to describe all the complications and associated conditions of the disease
- Do not assign code **Z79.4** from a medication list.
- Assign code **Z79.4** when the final assessment/impression clearly documents long-term, current use of insulin linked to diabetes, along with the dosage regimen and routine insulin use with ongoing prescription refills.
- Do not assign code **Z79.4** if insulin is given temporarily to bring a type 2 patient's blood sugar under control during an encounter.
- Do not code **E11.36** - Type 2 diabetes mellitus with diabetic cataract after the patient receives cataract surgery. Instead, use the status post procedure code.
- For code **E11.39** - Use additional code to identify manifestation, such as diabetic glaucoma (**H40-H42**)

Post procedural cataract extraction code category	
• Use additional code to identify intraocular lens implant status (Z96.1)	
Z98.41	Cataract extraction status, right eye
Z98.42	Cataract extraction status, left eye
Z98.49	Cataract extraction status, unspecified eye

*Additional digit(s) required to complete the diagnosis code.

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Coding Example

Case 1	A patient with cortical, nuclear, and posterior subcapsular cataracts of both eyes is seen for right phacoemulsification clear corneal intraocular lens implant. The patient also has type 2 diabetes. Should the cataracts be coded as diabetic complications?
AHA Coding Clinic 2019 2nd Quarter, page 30, Volume 6, Number 2 Rationale	Yes, it is appropriate to assign a code for diabetic cataract, based on the classification's presumed relationship between diabetes and cataracts. Assign code E11.36 , Type 2 diabetes mellitus with diabetic cataract. Assign also code H25.813 , Combined forms of age-related cataract, bilateral for further specificity

References

- [ICD-10-CM Official Coding Guidelines](#)
- [Coding Clinic Advisor](#)
- [Diabetes Mellitus Doc and Coding Tip Sheet \(2025\)](#)

Questions?

Contact us at #Risk_Adjustments_and_clinical_Documentation@healthfirst.org

For additional documentation and coding guidance, please visit the coding section on [HFproviders.org](https://www.healthfirst.org/HFproviders.org)

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