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Morbid Obesity

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 **Morbid Obesity**. It provides information from industry sources about proper coding practice. 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.

To accurately code a patient as morbidly obese, the provider must document the patient's obesity in the medical record. Per 2020 ICD-10-CM Guidelines, "BMI codes should only be assigned when there is an associated, reportable diagnosis (such as morbid obesity, overweight, obese, obesity). Do not assign BMI codes during pregnancy."

ICD-10-CM Codes and Description

Code	Description
E66.01	Morbid (severe) obesity due to excess calories
E66.2	Morbid (severe) obesity with alveolar hypoventilation
E66.811	Obesity Class 1 (BMI of 30 to less than 35)
E66.812	Obesity Class 2 (BMI of 35 to less than 40)
E66.813	Obesity Class 3 (BMI of 40 or higher)
Z68.41	Body mass index [BMI] 40.0–44.9 adult

Code	Description
Z68.42	Body mass index [BMI] 45.0–49.9 adult
Z68.43	Body mass index [BMI] 50.0–59.9 adult
Z68.44	Body mass index [BMI] 60.0–69.9 adult
Z68.45	Body mass index [BMI] 70 or greater, adult

Documentation should include the following:

- The patient's height, weight, and BMI (a BMI ≥ 40 is considered extreme obesity) with the weight category stated such as obese, overweight, morbid obese.
- Specifically documented BMI in the medical record
- Presence or absence of any current symptoms related to morbid obesity, severe obesity, or extreme obesity
- Any associated diagnoses that caused the condition, with terms that show the cause-and-effect relationship (e.g., "due to," "secondary to," "related to," etc.)
- Any referrals to a nutritionist
- Educational material related to obesity conditions, with information about balanced diet, plan for follow-up visit, etc.
- Any history of Bariatric Surgery - **Z98.84**

NOTE: "Associated diagnoses such as morbid obesity must be documented by the patient's provider." (2020 ICD-10-CM Guidelines)

Coding Tips

- Z15.2 - Genetic susceptibility to obesity
  - Code also, if applicable, any associated manifestation such as: other obesity (E66.8-), Polyphagia (R63.2)
  - Use Additional code to identify body mass index (BMI), if known (Z68.-)
- The obesity class should be documented in the medical record by the provider for these codes to be assigned.
- If both class 3 obesity and morbid obesity are documented, only a code for class 3 obesity should be assigned as it is more specific.

References

- **https://www.cms.gov/files/document/fy-2025-icd-10-cm-coding-guidelines.pdf**
- **https://www.codingclinicadvisor.com/**
- **https://www.aapc.com/**

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**