

Clinical documentation improvements: Peripheral Vascular Disease (PVD)/Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD) and Atherosclerosis/Arteriosclerosis

PAD is defined as atherosclerotic occlusive arterial disease of the lower extremities, including arteries distal to the aortic bifurcation.

A diagnosis of peripheral vascular disease (**PVD**) or peripheral arterial disease (**PAD**) should always be accurately reported.

- Statements such as “peripheral arterial disease (PAD),” “peripheral vascular disease (PVD),” “intermittent claudication,” and “spasm of artery” all default to unspecified PVD (I73.9) in the tabular list of the ICD-10-CM coding book.
- Per ICD-10-CM Guideline, I.A.9.a, code I73.89 “Other PVD” is for specified but RARE conditions.
- Documentation to support PVD/PAD diagnosis should include signs & symptoms (including, but not limited to):
 - Claudication, Pain in lower extremities, change in temperature (extremities cool to touch)
 - Decreased sensation, Abnormal pedal pulses, Change in skin color (pallor), shiny skin on the legs
 - Weak arterial pulses, Edema in lower extremities
 - Hair loss or slower hair growth on the legs, slower growth toenails

Atherosclerosis/Arteriosclerosis:

- Atherosclerosis of the aorta (vessel, I70.0) has a different code than atherosclerosis of the aortic valve (I35.X, Nonrheumatic aortic valve disorders)
- Always document to the highest specificity and severity
- Best practice: Clinical support includes documentation from chest x-rays, ultrasound, ABI, echocardiogram, and/or doppler units, etc.

ICD code	Physician documentation
I70.20-	atherosclerosis native arteries of extremities, unspecified
I70.21-	atherosclerosis native arteries of extremities with intermittent claudication
I70.22-	atherosclerosis native arteries of extremities with rest pain
I70.23-*	atherosclerosis native arteries of right leg with ulceration
I70.24-*	atherosclerosis native arteries of left leg with ulceration
I70.25-	atherosclerosis native arteries of other extremities with ulceration
	* Use additional code (L97.-) to report severity of the ulcer. - Use a 6th character to identify laterality and/or location: (1) right leg, (2) left leg, (3) bilateral legs, (8) other extremity, (9) unspecified extremity

Diabetic peripheral angiopathy (PVD/PAD) and other circulatory complications:

- If the patient has PAD/PVD (or atherosclerosis of the native arteries of the extremities) and diabetes, a causal relationship can be associated even in the absence of the provider, unless documentation clearly states the conditions are unrelated¹. Document signs and symptoms of manifestation for clinical relevance.

ICD code	Physician documentation
E11.51	Type 2 diabetes mellitus with peripheral angiopathy without gangrene
E11.52	Type 2 diabetes mellitus with peripheral angiopathy with gangrene

- Diabetes with other circulatory complications (E11.59) can be associated with hypertensive disorders, angina pectoris, etc. Documentation should reflect the relationship between the two diagnoses.

References

1. ICD-10CM guideline 1.A.15

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3861931/>

<https://www.healthline.com/health/peripheral-vascular-disease>

[Arteriosclerosis / atherosclerosis - Symptoms and causes - Mayo Clinic](#)

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/peripheral-artery-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20350557>

ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting/Diseases of arteries, arterioles, and capillaries (I70-I79)

AmeriHealth coding and documentation education materials are based on current guidelines, are to be used for reference only, and are not intended to replace the authoritative guidance of the ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting as approved by the American Hospital Association (AHA), the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). Clinical and coding decisions are to be made based on the following:

1. *The independent judgment of the treating physician or qualified health care practitioner.*
2. *The best interests of the patient.*
3. *The clinical documentation as contained in the medical record*

** Indicates code is from an ICD category, additional characters are needed.*

Coverage issued by AmeriHealth HMO, Inc. and/or AmeriHealth Insurance Company of New Jersey