

# ICD-10 COMETH: How about ICD-10 codes for COPD?

BY DR. MICHAEL E. NELSON, FCCP

There are special instructions for coding exacerbations of chronic bronchitis and asthma. The ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting, available at [www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/2015-ICD-10-CM-and-GEMs.html](http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Coding/ICD10/2015-ICD-10-CM-and-GEMs.html), specifically define an acute exacerbation of chronic obstructive bronchitis or asthma.

The codes in categories J44 and J45 distinguish between uncomplicated cases and those in acute exacerbation.

An acute exacerbation is a worsening or a decompensation of a chronic condition. An acute exacerbation is not equivalent to an infection superimposed on a chronic condition, though an exacerbation may be triggered by an infection.

You will also notice that there are “Other” codes

and “Unspecified” codes. “Other” codes are utilized when the clinical information describes a diagnosis for which a separate code does not exist. “Unspecified” codes are used when the clinical information is not sufficient to assign a more specific code.

Remember, the more specific that one is with the code, the less likely the code is to be rejected by the payer.

J40-J44 Chronic lower respiratory disease	
<b>Excludes 1:</b>	Bronchitis due to chemicals, gases, fumes and vapors (J68.0)
<b>Excludes 2:</b>	Cystic fibrosis (E84.-)
<b>J40</b>	<b>Bronchitis, not specified as acute or chronic</b>
	Bronchitis NOS Bronchitis with tracheitis NOS Catarrhal bronchitis Tracheobronchitis NOS <b>Use additional</b> code to identify: exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z77.22) exposure to tobacco smoke in the perinatal period (P96.81) history of tobacco use (Z87.891) occupational exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z57.31) tobacco dependence (F17.-) tobacco use (Z72.0) <b>Excludes 1:</b> acute bronchitis (J20.-) allergic bronchitis NOS (J45.909-) asthmatic bronchitis NOS (J45.9-) bronchitis due to chemicals, gases, fumes and vapors (J68.0)
<b>J41</b>	<b>Simple and mucopurulent chronic bronchitis</b>
	<b>Use additional</b> code to identify: exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z77.22) exposure to tobacco smoke in the perinatal period (P96.81) history of tobacco use (Z87.891) occupational exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z57.31) tobacco dependence (F17.-) tobacco use (Z72.0) <b>Excludes 1:</b> chronic bronchitis NOS (J42) chronic obstructive bronchitis (J44.-)
<b>J41.0</b>	<b>Simple chronic bronchitis</b>
<b>J41.1</b>	<b>Mucopurulent chronic bronchitis</b>
<b>J41.8</b>	<b>Mixed simple and mucopurulent chronic bronchitis</b>
<b>J42</b>	<b>Unspecified chronic bronchitis</b>
	Chronic bronchitis NOS Chronic tracheitis Chronic tracheobronchitis <b>Use additional</b> code to identify: exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z77.22) exposure to tobacco smoke in the perinatal period (P96.81) history of tobacco use (Z87.891) occupational exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z57.31) tobacco dependence (F17.-) tobacco use (Z72.0) <b>Excludes 1:</b> chronic asthmatic bronchitis (J44.-) chronic bronchitis with airways obstruction (J44.-) chronic emphysematous bronchitis (J44.-) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease NOS (J44.9) simple and mucopurulent chronic bronchitis (J41.-)

<b>J43</b>	<b>Emphysema</b>
	<b>Use additional</b> code to identify: exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z77.22) history of tobacco use (Z87.891) occupational exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z57.31) tobacco dependence (F17.-) tobacco use (Z72.0) <b>Excludes 1:</b> compensatory emphysema (J98.3) emphysema due to inhalation of chemicals, gases, fumes or vapors (J68.4) emphysema with chronic (obstructive) bronchitis (J44.-) emphysematous (obstructive) bronchitis (J44.-) interstitial emphysema (J98.2) mediastinal emphysema (J98.2) neonatal interstitial emphysema (P25.0) surgical (subcutaneous) emphysema (T81.82) traumatic subcutaneous emphysema (T79.7)
<b>J43.0</b>	<b>Unilateral pulmonary emphysema [MacLeod's syndrome]</b>
	Swyer-James syndrome Unilateral emphysema Unilateral hyperlucent lung Unilateral pulmonary artery functional hypoplasia Unilateral transparency of lung
<b>J43.1</b>	<b>Panlobular emphysema</b>
	Panacinar emphysema
<b>J43.2</b>	<b>Centrilobular emphysema</b>
<b>J43.8</b>	<b>Other emphysema</b>
<b>J43.9</b>	<b>Emphysema, unspecified</b>
	Bullous emphysema (lung)(pulmonary) Emphysema (lung)(pulmonary) NOS Emphysematous bleb Vesicular emphysema (lung)(pulmonary)
<b>J44</b>	<b>Other chronic obstructive pulmonary disease</b>
	<b>Includes:</b> asthma with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease chronic asthmatic (obstructive) bronchitis chronic bronchitis with airways obstruction chronic bronchitis with emphysema chronic emphysematous bronchitis chronic obstructive asthma chronic obstructive bronchitis chronic obstructive tracheobronchitis <b>Code also</b> type of asthma if applicable (J45.-) <b>Use additional</b> code to identify: exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z77.22) history of tobacco use (Z87.891) occupational exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (Z57.31) tobacco dependence (F17.-) tobacco use (Z72.0) <b>Excludes 1:</b> bronchiectasis (J47.-) chronic bronchitis NOS (J42) chronic simple and mucopurulent bronchitis (J41.-) chronic tracheitis (J42) chronic tracheobronchitis (J42) emphysema without chronic bronchitis (J43.-) lung diseases due to external agents (J60-J70)
<b>J44.0</b>	<b>Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with acute lower respiratory infection</b>
	<b>Use additional</b> code to identify the infection
<b>J44.1</b>	<b>Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease with (acute) exacerbation</b>
	Decompensated COPD Decompensated COPD with (acute) exacerbation <b>Excludes 2:</b> chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] with acute bronchitis (J44.0)
<b>J44.9</b>	<b>Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, unspecified</b>
	Chronic obstructive airway disease NOS Chronic obstructive lung disease NOS