

Documentation and Coding Tips

Atherosclerosis of Aorta

St. Luke's Health Partner's is committed to helping providers accurately document and code their patient's health records.

Atherosclerosis of the aorta is a common, chronic condition in the elderly and is often noted incidentally on a chest x-ray, abdominal imaging, imaging of major vessels, spinal imaging, and angiography.

When documenting and coding atherosclerosis of the aorta, it's important to follow these critical tips for compliant code selection.

Documentation Tips:

- Define in your note whether you are addressing the valve or the vessel.
 - Many EMR systems default to "aortic" atherosclerosis.
 - "Aorta" refers to the vessel.
 - "Aortic" refers to the valve.
- Where possible and known, document the section of the aorta for further clarity (i.e., atherosclerosis of the abdominal aorta).
- Indicate any clinical significance of the condition and impact on other conditions.
- Note your treatment plan with any current medications, follow up or lifestyle changes.

Documentation & Coding Examples

Non-specific documentation example:

HPI: Patient seen today for AWW. Discussed his aortic atherosclerosis.

Assessment and Plan: Aortic atherosclerosis-stable, follow up in one year.

Rationale: Coding cannot take place where there is conflicting information such as "aortic" in the short description and no further clarification if the vessel or the valve was addressed.

Specific documentation example:

Assessment and Plan: Patient with atherosclerosis of aorta noted on CT abdomen dated 3-15-2015. Stable-continue Simvastatin.

Rationale: Documentation addresses the location of aorta. Correct code selection is I70.0 Atherosclerosis of aorta.