

**FOCUS ON:** Vascular disease<sup>1</sup>

The vascular system is composed of the heart, blood vessels, lymphatics and their parts collectively. It contains a vast network of blood vessels throughout the human body; any problem along this network can cause pain, disability and death. Cardiovascular disease is the leading global cause of death, accounting for more than 17.6 million deaths per year in 2016, a number that is expected to grow to more than 23.6 million by 2030, according to a 2014 study. CVD and stroke accounted for 14% of total health expenditures in 2014–2015. This is more than any major diagnostic group.<sup>1</sup>

**Peripheral arterial disease (PAD)**

PAD in the legs or lower extremities is the narrowing or blockage of the vessels that carry blood from the heart to the legs. It is primarily caused by the buildup of fatty plaque in the arteries, which is called atherosclerosis. PAD can occur in any blood vessel, but it is more common in the legs than the arms. Approximately 8.5 million people in the United States have PAD, including 12–20% of individuals older than age 60. General population awareness of PAD is estimated at 25%, based on prior studies. One in every 20 Americans over the age of 50 has PAD.<sup>2</sup>

The American Heart Association gauges the cardiovascular health of the nation by tracking seven key health factors and behaviors that increase risks for heart disease and stroke, called “Life’s Simple 7”. These factors track progress toward a 2020 Impact Goal: to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20% and to reduce deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke. “Life’s Simple 7” are:

1. Manage blood pressure
2. Control cholesterol
3. Reduce blood sugar
4. Get active
5. Eat better
6. Lose weight
7. Stop smoking

Per the ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY 2020: “A dash (-) at the end of an alphabetic index entry indicates that additional characters are required. Even if a dash is not included at the alphabetic index entry, it is necessary to refer to the tabular list to verify that no 7th character is required.” The bolding of the ICD-10-CM codes represents categories, subcategories or codes that map to the CMS-HCC risk adjustment model for payment year 2021.

This guidance is to be used for easy reference; however, the current ICD-10-CM code classification and the Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting are the authoritative references for accurate and complete coding. The information presented herein is for general informational purposes only. Neither Optum nor its affiliates warrant or represent that the information contained herein is complete, accurate or free from defects. Specific documentation is reflective of the “thought process” of the provider when treating patients. All conditions affecting the care, treatment or management of the patient should be documented with their status and treatment, and coded to the highest level of specificity. Enhanced precision and accuracy in the codes selected is the ultimate goal. Lastly, on April 6, 2020, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that 2020 dates of service for the 2021 payment year model are based on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Announcement. <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/2021-announcement.pdf>

The following references were used to create the content of this document:

Optum360 ICD-10-CM: Professional for Physicians 2020. Salt Lake City, UT: 2019.

1. [https://professional.heart.org/idc/groups/ahamah-public/@wcm/@sop/@smd/documents/downloadable/ucm\\_503396.pdf](https://professional.heart.org/idc/groups/ahamah-public/@wcm/@sop/@smd/documents/downloadable/ucm_503396.pdf). Accessed July 27, 2020
2. [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/pad/docs/pad\\_extfctstht\\_general\\_508.pdf](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/pad/docs/pad_extfctstht_general_508.pdf). Accessed July 29, 2020

**Documentation and coding tips**

Atherosclerotic disease is a progressive disease. Therefore, avoid documenting “history of peripheral vascular disease” and instead consider “known peripheral arterial disease”.

- **I73.9** Peripheral vascular disease Includes:  
peripheral arterial disease, peripheral angiopathy  
and intermittent claudication

When PAD or atherosclerosis is documented as a manifestation of diabetes, use one of the following combination codes:

- **E11.51** Type 2 diabetes mellitus with diabetic peripheral angiopathy without gangrene
- **E11.52** Type 2 diabetes mellitus with diabetic peripheral angiopathy with gangrene

Codes in category I70 include: Atherosclerosis, arteriolosclerosis, arterial degeneration, arteriosclerotic vascular disease and vascular degeneration.

For category I70, use additional code to identify: Exposure to tobacco smoke (Z77.22), history of tobacco dependence (Z87.891), occupational exposure to tobacco smoke (Z57.31), tobacco dependence (F17.-), tobacco use (Z72.0).

- **I70.0** Atherosclerosis of the aorta
- **I70.20-** Unspecified atherosclerosis of native arteries of extremities
- **I70.21-** Atherosclerosis of native arteries of extremities with intermittent claudication
- **I70.22-** Atherosclerosis of native arteries of extremities with rest pain
- **I70.23-** Atherosclerosis of native arteries of right leg with ulceration
- **I70.24-** Atherosclerosis of native arteries of left leg with ulceration
- **I70.25-** Atherosclerosis of native arteries of other extremities with ulceration
- **I70.26-** Atherosclerosis of native arteries of extremities with gangrene
- **I70.29-** Other atherosclerosis of native arteries of extremities

*Note: For I70.20- - I70.22- use 6th character: 1=right leg, 2=left leg, 3=bilateral legs, 8=other extremity, 9=unsp. extremity*

*Note: For I70.23-, I70.24-, I70.26- and I70.29- use a 6th character to identify location of the left leg: 1=thigh, 2=calf, 3=ankle, 4=heel and midfoot, 5=other part of foot, 8=other part of lower leg, 9=unsp. site*

*Note: For I70.23- - I70.26- use additional code to identify the severity of any ulcer (L97.-, L98.49-), if applicable*