

HEDIS[®] Tips: Acute Bronchitis



Measure Description

Members three months of age and older who were diagnosed with acute bronchitis/bronchiolitis and were not dispensed an antibiotic prescription within three days of the visit¹

Note: Prescribing antibiotics for acute bronchitis is not indicated unless there is a comorbid diagnosis or coexisting bacterial infection (examples below). Only about 10% of cases of acute bronchitis are due to a bacterial infection, so in most cases, antibiotics will not help.

Using Correct Billing Codes for Acute Bronchitis

Codes to Identify Acute Bronchitis

Description	ICD-10 Code(s)
Acute Bronchitis	J20.3–J20.9, J21.0, J21.1, J21.8, J21.9

Codes to Identify Comorbid Conditions

Description	ICD-10 Code(s)
Acute Bronchitis	J20.0, J20.1, J20.2, J20.3, J20.4, J20.5, J20.6, J20.7, J20.8, J20.9, J21.0, J21.1, J21.8, J21.9, J40
Emphysema	J43.0, J43.1, J43.2, J43.8, J43.9
COPD	J44.0, J44.1, J44.9

Codes to Identify Coexisting Diagnosis

Description	ICD-10 Code(s)
Pharyngitis	J02.0, J02.8, J02.9, J03.00, J03.01, J03.80, J03.81, J03.90, J03.91

Tips to Improve HEDIS Scores

Telehealth visits are allowed for this measure:

- Includes telephone visit, e-visit, or virtual check-in (observation and ED visits as well)
- Do not prescribe antibiotics when treating acute bronchitis **unless** there are comorbid conditions or competing diagnoses that require antibiotic therapy.

If the member or caregiver insists on an antibiotic:

- Arrange an early follow-up visit by telehealth or re-examination (tell them to follow-up in three or more days if symptoms worsen or don't improve).
- Write a prescription for symptom relief instead of an antibiotic.
- Review bacterial infection symptoms with the member/caregiver and inform them that antibiotics will not help with viral infections. Discuss the side effects of antibiotic use.

Refer to the illness as a chest cold or lower respiratory infection and educate the member of caregiver on at-home treatment:

- Over-the-counter (OTC) medicines appropriate for the patient (such as cough, cold, pain reliever and anti-inflammatory medicines)
- Getting plenty of rest and drinking extra fluids

Submit all diagnosis codes if present on the claim/encounter for visit.

¹ NCQA. HEDIS[®] MY2024, Volume 2. Technical Specifications for Health Plans. (AAB).