



Date: February 10, 2022

Topic: Coding Encephalopathy

People may experience:

Cognitive: altered level of consciousness, amnesia, inability to speak or understand language, lack of concentration, mental confusion, or slowness in activity

Muscular: problems with coordination, rhythmic muscle contractions, rhythmic muscle spasm, or overactive reflexes

Whole body: fainting or fatigue

Also common: abnormal breathing pattern, coma, delirium, flapping hand tremor, personality change, rapid involuntary eye movement, or seizures with no outward symptoms

What causes encephalopathy?



The causes of encephalopathy are numerous and varied; they include **infections, anoxia, metabolic problems, toxins, drugs, physiologic changes, trauma, and other causes**. Encephalopathy is a general term that means brain disease, damage, or malfunction. The major symptom of encephalopathy is an altered mental state.

Other Toxic encephalopathy G928 (new code effective October 2021) is a neurologic disorder caused by exposure to **neurotoxic organic solvents such as toluene**, following exposure to heavy metals such as manganese, or an adverse effect to prescription drugs, or exposure to extreme concentrations of ...

Coding guidelines:

Use Additional code for adverse effect, if applicable, to identify drug ([T36-T50](#) with fifth or sixth character 5)

Code First poisoning due to drug or toxin, if applicable, ([T36-T65](#) with fifth or sixth character 1-4 or 6)



Metabolic encephalopathy G9341 is **a problem in the brain**. It is caused by a chemical imbalance in the blood. The imbalance is caused by an illness or organs that are not working as well as they should. It is not caused by a head injury. When the imbalance affects the brain, it can lead to personality changes.

Coding Encephalopathy:

- Hepatic encephalopathy is NOT synonymous with hepatic coma
- If encephalopathy is due to hypoglycemia in a diabetic patient, metabolic encephalopathy is reported as an additional diagnosis
- Seizure and encephalopathy:
 - Static encephalopathy may be reported in addition to epilepsy (this is a chronic state and not a postictal state)
 - When encephalopathy is due to postictal state it is not coded separately since it is integral to the seizure
- Other encephalopathy is coded when it is linked to a specific condition and there is no specific encephalopathy listed in the index (e.g., hypertensive, anoxic, metabolic, toxic, etc.)
- When documentation of Encephalopathy is due to sepsis/septic should be reported as metabolic (see ICD-10-CM Index)

REFERENCES:

ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding and Reporting FY 2021 and 2022
www.medicinenet.com

Note: While the above education will assist the coder with accuracy each encounter may have specific variations of documentation for both diagnosis coding and/or procedure coding. Please note all encounters should be reviewed for possible query for clarification of **documentation in the health record for accurate code assignment.**