BCA's Evaluation and Management Coding Tool: Emergency Department Services

CPT Code	99282	99283	99284	99285
Medical Decision Making (MDM) **2/3 Elements Must be Met**	**STRAIGHTFORWARD**	**LOW MDM**	**MODERATE MDM**	**HIGH MDM**
1. Number & Complexity of Problems Addressed	Minimal • 1 self-limited or minor problem	**LIMITED** • 2 or more self-limited or minor problems; • 1 stable chronic illness; **or** • 1 acute, uncomplicated illness **or** injury	**MODERATE:** • 1 or more chronic illnesses w/exacerbation; • 2 or more stable chronic illnesses; or • 1 undiagnosed new problem w/uncertain prognosis; or • 1 acute illness w/systemic symptoms; or • 1 acute complicated injury	**HIGH:** • 1 or more chronic illnesses w/severe exacerbation, progression, or side effects of treatment; or • 1 acute or chronic illness or injury that poses a threat to life or bodily function
2. Amount and/or Complexity of Data to be reviewed and Analyzed	Minimal or none	**LIMITED:** *(Must meet at least **1 out of 2 categories**)* **Category 1:** Tests, documents, or independent historian(s) *Any combination of **2** of the following:* • Review of prior external note(s), each unique source*; • Review of the result(s) of each unique test*; • Ordering of each unique test*; **Category 2:** Assessment requiring independent historian(s)	**MODERATE:** (Must meet at least 1 out of 3 categories) Category 1: Tests, documents, or independent historian(s) Any combination of 3 from the following: • Review of prior external note(s) from each unique source*; • Review of the result(s) of each unique test*; • Ordering of each unique test*; • Assessment requiring an independent historian(s) Category 2: Independent interpretation of tests performed by another qualified health care professional; Category 3: Discussion of management or test interpretation with external qualified health care professional/appropriate source	**EXTENSIVE:** (Must meet at least 2 out of 3 categories) Category 1: Tests, documents, or independent historian(s) Any combination of 3 from the following: • Review of prior external note(s) from each unique source*; • Review of the result(s) of each unique test*; • Ordering of each unique test*; • Assessment requiring an independent historian(s) Category 2: Independent interpretation of tests performed by another qualified health care professional; Category 3: Discussion of management or test interpretation with external qualified health care professional/appropriate source
3. Risk of Complications and/or Morbidity/Mortality of Patient Management	**MINIMAL RISK** *(Examples only):* • Rest/Gargles • Superficial dressings/bandages	**LOW RISK** *(Examples only):* • Over-the-counter drugs • Physical Therapy	**MODERATE RISK** of morbidity from additional diagnostic testing or treatment: MODERATE RISK (Examples only): • Prescription drug management • Decision regarding minor surgery w/ identified risk factors • Diagnosis/treatment significantly limited by Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)	**HIGH RISK** of morbidity from additional diagnostic testing or treatment: HIGH RISK (Examples only): • Therapy requiring intensive monitoring for toxicity • Decision regarding: emergency major surgery, hospitalization d/t poor prognosis • Parenteral controlled substances • Decision regarding elective major procedure with identified patient or procedure risk factors

Elements (3) of Medical Decision Making (MDM): In order to qualify for a particular Level of Medical Decision Making: TWO of the THREE ELEMENTS of MDM MUST BE MET or exceeded

1. **Number & Complexity of Problems Addressed:** A problem is addressed when it is evaluated or treated at the encounter by the qualified health care professional reporting the service.
2. **Amount and/or Complexity of Data to be reviewed and Analyzed:** Data includes medical records, tests, and/or other information that must be obtained, ordered, reviewed, and analyzed.
3. **Risk of Complications and/or Morbidity/Mortality of Patient Management:** For the purposes of MDM, level of risk is based upon consequences of the problem(s) addressed.

Self-limited or minor problem	A problem that runs a definite and prescribed course, is transient in nature, and is not likely to permanently alter health status.
Acute, uncomplicated illness/injury	A recent or new short-term problem w/low risk of morbidity. Little to no risk of mortality, full recovery expected. *Examples: allergic rhinitis or a simple sprain.*
Undiagnosed new problem w/uncertain prognosis	A problem in the differential diagnosis that represents a condition likely to result in a high risk of morbidity without treatment. *An example may include a lump in the breast.*
Acute, complicated injury	An injury which requires treatment that includes evaluation of body systems that are not directly part of the injured organ, the injury is extensive, or the treatment options are multiple and/or associated with risk of morbidity. *An example may include a head injury with brief loss of consciousness.*
Chronic illness with severe exacerbation, or side effects	The severe exacerbation or progression of a chronic illness or severe side effects of treatment that have significant risk of morbidity and may require hospital level of care. *Examples may include: Exacerbated COPD or T2DM requiring hospitalization to stabilize.*
Acute or chronic illness/injury poses a threat to life or bodily function	An acute illness with systemic symptoms, or an acute complicated injury, or a chronic illness or injury with exacerbation and/or progression or side effects of treatment, that poses a threat to life or bodily function in the near term without treatment. *Examples may include: acute MI, PE, severe respiratory distress*
Emergency Department Coding Reminders:	There is no distinction between **New** or **Established** Patients. Medically appropriate History and Exam with clinicial impression sh/be well-documented. Time is **NOT** a descriptive component of ED services. Code selection is based on medically appropriate **MDM.** If patient is seen in the ED department out of convience only, use office or other outpatient service codes.

This quick-reference coding tool is based off of AMA guidelines as published in CPT© 2023 Professional Edition. See AMA guidelines for full details. Visit us at www.bcarev.com for training on the use of this tool and others.