

ICD-10 Coding Tips are brief, one-page, informative examples of ICD-10 conventions, guidelines, terminology and/or codes of the classification system. These tips are intended for Coding professionals, Coding auditors, educators and Coding Management staff.



TIP #28: ICD-10-CM – Health Factors (Z Codes)

Chapter 21, Factors Influencing Health Status and Contact with Health Services General Guidelines The first character for all codes in Chapter 21 is always “Z”. ➤ Z codes can be used in any healthcare setting ➤ Z codes may be used as either a principal or fist-listed diagnosis or a secondary diagnosis, depending on the circumstances of the encounter. ➤ Z codes indicate the reason for the encounter. Categories of Z Codes		Follow-up Used for continuing surveillance following completed treatment of a disease, conditions or injury. They imply that the condition has been fully treated and no longer exists. Ex: <i>Z08, Encounter for follow-up examination after completed treatment for malignant neoplasm.</i>
		Donor Used for living individuals who are donating blood or other body tissue for others, not for self-donations. Ex: <i>Z52.3 Bone marrow donor.</i>
		Counseling Used when a patient or family member receives assistance in the aftermath of an illness or injury, or when support is required in coping with family or social problems. Not used in conjunction with a diagnosis code when the counseling component is considered integral to standard treatment. Ex: <i>Z31.5, Encounter for genetic counseling, Z69.81, Encounter for mental health services for victim of other abuse.</i>
		Encounters for obstetrical and reproductive services Used for pregnancy when no problems or complications from the Obstetrics chapter exist. Ex: <i>Z34.0- Encounter for supervision of normal first pregnancy.</i> Also used for family planning (contraceptive) or procreative management and counseling. Ex: <i>Z31.41 Encounter for fertility testing.</i>
		Newborns and infants Used for encounters for routine child health examinations. Ex: <i>Z00.11-, Newborn health examination.</i> Used for Liveborn infants according to place of birth and type of delivery. Ex: <i>Z38.00, Single Liveborn infant, delivered vaginally.</i>
		Routine and administrative examinations Used for encounters for routine examinations, such as, a general checkup, or examinations for administrative purposes, such as, a pre-employment physical. Ex: <i>Z00.00, Encounter for general adult medical examination without abnormal findings.</i>
		Miscellaneous Z codes Capture a number of other health care encounters that do not fall into one of the other categories. Ex: <i>Z40.01, Encounter for prophylactic removal of breast; Z59.0, Homelessness.</i>
		Nonspecific Z codes Rarely used for inpatients. Used for outpatients when no other sign or symptom or any other reason for visit that is captured in another code should be used. Ex: <i>Z13.9, Encounter for screening, unspecified.</i>
		Z codes that may only be principal/ first-listed diagnosis Certain Z codes may only be reported as the principal/first listed diagnosis. Ex: <i>Z03.-, Encounter for medical observation for suspected diseases and conditions ruled out; Z34.-, Encounter for supervision of normal pregnancy.</i>
Category	Description	
Contact/ exposure	For possible exposure to communicable diseases, without showing signs or symptoms. Ex: <i>Z20.4, Contact with and (suspected) exposure to rubella. Contact with and suspected exposures hazardous to health, Ex: Z77.010 Contact with and (suspected) exposure to arsenic.</i>	
Inoculations /vaccinations	Encounters for inoculations and vaccinations. Ex: <i>Z23, Encounter for immunization.</i>	
Status	Indicates that a patient is either a carrier of a disease or has the sequelae or residual of a past disease or condition. Ex: <i>Z16, Resistance to antimicrobial drugs, Z22.0, Carrier of typhoid, Z68, Body mass index (BMI)</i>	
History (of)	Indicates patient had a medical condition in the past, but it no longer exists is not being treated. Ex: <i>Z85.830, Personal history of malignant neoplasm of bone.</i> Also that a member of the patient’s family has or had a condition. Ex: <i>Z83.3, Family history of diabetes mellitus.</i>	
Screening	For testing for disease or disease precursors in seemingly well individuals for early detection and treatment. Ex: <i>Z12.11, Encounter for screening for malignant neoplasm of colon.</i>	
Observation	Used in limited circumstances when a person is being observed for a suspected condition that is ruled out. Ex: <i>Z03.810 Encounter for observation for suspected exposure to anthrax ruled out.</i>	
Aftercare	For encounters after the initial treatment is done and the patient requires continued care during the healing or recovery phase, or for long-term consequences of the disease. Ex: <i>Z43.0 Encounter for attention to tracheostomy; Z47.1, Aftercare following joint replacement surgery.</i>	