

In this Issue

MALIGNANT NEOPLASM

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For access to & information on how to use the Wellcare by Allwell provider portal, please visit:

<https://www.azcompletehealth.com/providers/resources/claims-payment.html>

For questions or more information on Quality, please reach out to:

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GUIDE TO DOCUMENTING MALIGNANT NEOPLASM

DEFINITION:

Malignant neoplasm refers to any one of a large number of diseases characterized by the development of abnormal cells that divide uncontrollably and have the ability to infiltrate and destroy normal body tissue. **Cancer is the second-leading cause of death in the world.**



HIGH RISK PATIENTS:

- Obesity increases the risk for developing malignant neoplasm
- Some types of viral infections, such as human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Exposure to radiation, including ultraviolet radiation from the sun
- A personal or family history of cancer
- Using tobacco or alcohol

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

- Change in bowel or bladder habits
- A sore that doesn't heal
- Unusual bleeding or discharge
- Thickening or lump in the breast or elsewhere
- Indigestion or difficulty swallowing
- Obvious change in a wart or mole
- Nagging cough or hoarseness
- Weight loss, anemia, fatigue
- Drenching night sweats



DIAGNOSTICS TO CONFIRM MALIGNANT NEOPLASM:

- **Labs:** Tests of blood, urine, other body fluids, and tissue samples.
- **Imaging Tests:** CT scan, MRI, nuclear scan, bone scan, PET scan, ultrasound, x-rays, biopsy.



TREATMENTS:

- **Primary Treatment:** The goal of primary treatment is to completely remove the neoplasm. Surgery is the most common but if the neoplasm is sensitive to radiation therapy or chemotherapy, this may be the source of primary treatment.
- **Adjuvant Treatment:** The goal of adjuvant treatment is to kill any cells that may remain after the primary treatment. Common therapies include chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and hormone therapy.
- **Palliative Treatment:** Palliative treatments may help relieve side effects of treatment or signs and symptoms caused by the neoplasm itself and can be used at the same time as other treatments intended to cure the neoplasm.

COMMON COMPLICATIONS OF CANCER AND TREATMENT:

- Protein calorie malnutrition-can result from cancer, side effect of treatment, and depression
- Peripheral neuropathy-due to treatment or the cancer itself
- Major depression-common during chronic illness
- Neutropenia or pancytopenia-due to treatment
- Cardiomyopathy-due to treatment

**DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES TO SUPPORT
ACTIVE TREATMENT:**

- Watchfully waiting before deciding to begin treatment
- Taking adjuvant therapy e.g., lupron or tamoxifen
- Undergoing treatment e.g., chemo or radiation
- Unresponsive to treatment, waiting for treatment, refusing treatment

**DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES TO SUPPORT
HISTORICAL NEOPLASM:**

- Cured, history of, without evidence of disease, undergoing surveillance for recurrence only.

DOCUMENT ANY METASTASES AS A SECONDARY MALIGNANCY:

- Metastatic to-the site mentioned is secondary i.e., metastatic carcinoma to the lung would be coded and reported as secondary malignant neoplasm of the lung.
- Metastatic from-the site mentioned is the primary site i.e., metastatic carcinoma from the breast indicates the breast is the primary site.

NOTE: These guidelines attempt to define practices that meet the needs of most members in most circumstances. The ultimate judgment regarding the care of an individual member must be made by the provider and member in light of all circumstances presented by the member