

Hypertension

Documentation and coding: Individual & Family Plans

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For coding education questions, email CignaHealthcareHCPEducation@CignaHealthcare.com.

It's important to accurately document and code diagnoses when submitting claims for your patients with Cigna Healthcare-administered coverage. This helps ensure your diagnosis and coding practices comply with all applicable legal requirements,¹ while enabling us to provide our customers with the benefits and resources they need. For additional information and resources, visit the Cigna Healthcare Individual & Family Plans page at CignaforHCP.com/IFP.

The information that follows is designed to provide guidance for the documentation and coding of claims for your patients with hypertension. It is not meant to replace your judgment when caring for your patients.

Definition and diagnostic criteria²

The following staging system for hypertension (HTN) was suggested by the American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association (ACC/AHA).

Stage	Description
Normal	Less than 120/80 mm Hg
Elevated	Systolic between 120 and 129, and diastolic less than 80
Stage 1	Systolic between 130 and 139, or diastolic between 80 and 89
Stage 2	Systolic at least 140, or diastolic at least 90 mm Hg
Normal	Less than 120/80 mm Hg

Documentation and coding

- Document HTN and any associated manifestations with a combination code. e.g., ICD-10-CM³ codes I11 (hypertensive heart disease with heart failure), I12 (hypertensive chronic kidney disease [CKD]), and I13 (hypertensive heart and CKD).
- Note that documentation of ICD-10 code I10 HTN is not needed when captured in a combination code.
- Document the stage of the manifestation specificity as an additional code. e.g., CKD stage 3 or diastolic congestive heart failure (CHF). See ICD-10-CM guidelines for CKD and CHF.
- Confirm that the face-to-face or telehealth encounter is signed and dated by the clinician. Include the printed version that contains the clinician's full name and credentials (e.g., MD, DO, NP, PA).
- Document the treatment plan and follow up. A treatment plan can be in the form of a medication, referral, diet, monitoring and/or ordering a diagnostic exam.
- When using ICD-10 code I16.- (hypertensive crisis, urgency, and emergency), document the:
 - Systolic blood pressure when > 180 mm Hg or
 - Diastolic blood pressure when > 110 mm Hg.

Subjective documentation considerations⁴

Risk factor type	Examples
Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced age• Obesity• Family history• Sedentary / unhealthy lifestyle
Modifiable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current cigarette smoking• Second-hand smoke• Diabetes• Dyslipidemia / hypercholesterolemia• Medications
Relatively fixed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low socioeconomic / educational status• Male gender• Psychosocial stress• Other medical conditions (e.g., obstructive sleep apnea, CKD, renal or endocrine disorders)

Objective documentation considerations⁴

- The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends:
 - Screening for HTN in adults aged 18 or older with office blood pressure measurement.
 - Obtaining blood pressure measurements outside of the clinical setting for diagnostic confirmation before starting treatment.
- Evaluation frequency appropriateness:
 - Adults aged 40+ or those with HTN risk factorsannually
 - Adults aged 18–39 with normal measurementsevery 3–5 years
- At screening, patient should not be acutely ill and not using hypertensive medications.

Hypertension (HTN)

ICD-10 code	Description	Documentation tips	ICD-10 code	Description	Documentation tips
I10	Essential (primary) HTN	Excludes essential (primary) HTN involving vessels of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brain (I60–I69). Eye (H35.0-). 	I15.0	Renovascular HTN	Also code underlying condition.
I11.0	Hypertensive heart disease with heart failure	Use additional code to identify the type of heart failure (I50.-).	I15.1	HTN secondary to other renal disorders	
I11.9	Hypertensive heart disease without heart failure		I15.2	HTN secondary to endocrine disorders	
I12.0	Hypertensive CKD with stage 5 CKD or end stage renal disease (ESRD)	Use additional code to identify the stage of CKD (N18.5, N18.6).	I15.8	Other secondary HTN	
I12.9	Hypertensive CKD with stages 1–4 CKD or unspecified CKD	Use additional code to identify the stage of CKD (N18.1–N18.4, N18.9).	I15.9	Secondary HTN, unspecified	
I13.0	Hypertensive heart and CKD with heart failure and stages 1–4 CKD or unspecified CKD	Use additional code to identify the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type of heart failure (I50.-). Stage of CKD (N18.1–N18.4, N18.9). 	I16.0	Hypertensive urgency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also code any identified hypertensive disease (I10–I15). Use when systolic blood pressure is \geq 180 mm Hg or diastolic blood pressure is 110 mm Hg in the absence of associated organ damage.
I13.10	Hypertensive heart and CKD without heart failure with stages 1–4 CKD or unspecified CKD	Use additional code to identify the stage of CKD (N18.1–N18.4, N18.9).	I16.1	Hypertensive emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also code any identified hypertensive disease (I10–I15). Use when systolic blood pressure is \geq 180 mm Hg or diastolic blood pressure is 110 mm Hg in the presence of associated organ damage.
I13.11	Hypertensive heart and CKD without heart failure with stage 5 CKD or ESRD	Use additional code to identify the stage of CKD (N18.5, N18.6).	I16.9	Hypertensive crisis, unspecified	Also code any identified hypertensive disease (I10–I15). e.g., a life-threatening rapid increase in the patient's blood pressure
I13.2	Hypertensive heart and CKD with heart failure with stage 5 CKD or ESRD	Use additional code to identify the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type of heart failure (I50.-). Stage of CKD (N18.5, N18.6). 			

Additional codes for specificity of manifestations

ICD-10 code	Description	ICD-10 code	Description
N18.1	CKD stage 1	N18.9	CKD, unspecified
N18.2	CKD stage 2	I50.1–I50.89	CHF category codes
N18.3	CKD stage 3	I50.22	Chronic systolic (congestive) heart failure
N18.4	CKD stage 4	I50.32	Chronic diastolic (congestive) heart failure
N18.5	CKD stage 5	I50.42	Chronic combined systolic (congestive) and diastolic (congestive) heart failure
N18.6	ESRD		

- 1 Diagnosis inaccuracies that are not addressed can result in administrative sanctions and potential financial penalties.
- 2 "New ACC/AHA High Blood Pressure Guidelines Lower Definition of Hypertension." ACA. 13 November 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.ACC.org/latest-in-cardiology/articles/2017/11/08/11/47/mon-5pm-bp-guideline-aha-2017>.
3. International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, Clinical Modification.
4. "Hypertension in Adults: Screening." USPTF. 27 April 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.USPreventiveServicesTaskForce.org/uspsstf/recommendation/hypertension-in-adults-screening>.