

OBESITY

- Document the type of obesity – overweight, morbid/severe, class 1-3
- Ensure the obesity diagnosis is supported by the patient’s height/weight/BMI and clinical status
- Document a diet, exercise, or weight loss plan
- Link any comorbid conditions such as diabetes, sleep apnea, or hypertension

Clinical Concepts

National Institutes of Health (NIH) defines morbid or severe obesity as:

- ≥ 100 lbs above ideal body weight
- $BMI \geq 40$ or >35 with comorbidities

Evaluate for morbid/severe obesity when the BMI is greater than 35 with multiple comorbidities. Some examples of comorbidities include heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, prior stroke, and osteoarthritis.

Weight Classification	Adult BMI
Underweight	Less than 18.5
Normal Weight	18.5 – 24.9
Overweight	25.0 – 29.9
Class 1 Obesity (low-risk)	30.0 – 34.9
Class 2 Obesity (moderate-risk)	35.0 – 39.9
Class 3 Obesity (high-risk)	40 or greater

Documentation Matters

History – document the presence or absence of symptoms related to obesity, dietary habits, physical activity levels, and any previous medical or surgical interventions. Include any social, environmental, or economic factors that may be influencing weight.

Exam – document the patient’s height, weight and BMI; include relevant physical findings. Examples include:

- Adiposity
- Varicosities and/or edema
- Joint pain
- Altered gait or impaired mobility

Assessment – document the obesity diagnosis to the highest level of specificity. Include the BMI status and any causal conditions or comorbidities impacted by weight.

Plan – document the treatment or management plan and timeline for reevaluation or follow-up.

- Nutrition and/or exercise counseling
- Prescription medications
- Bariatric surgery
- Referral to specialist

Coding Guidance

In order for accurate code assignment to occur, the following information must be documented in the progress note:

- **Type/Classification**
 - Overweight
 - Class 1-3 obesity
 - Morbid/severe obesity
- **Cause (if known)**
 - Due to excess calories
 - Drug-induced
 - Specify drug
 - Due to gene mutation
- **BMI Status**

BMI status codes are reported only as secondary diagnoses in association with a primary diagnosis for which the BMI has clinical significance. The associated primary diagnosis (such as overweight, obesity, diabetes mellitus, etc.) must be documented by the treating healthcare provider. Failure to document and link the associated primary diagnosis may result in a query for clarification.

Do not assign a BMI code during pregnancy. Instead, assign a code for obesity complicating pregnancy, as well as an additional code from the obesity category to specify the type of obesity.

References

[ICD-10-CM Official Guidelines for Coding & Reporting](#)
AHA Coding Clinic, Q4 2018

Overweight & Obesity Diagnoses

ICD-10-CM	Code Description	HCC Model
E66.01	Morbid (severe) obesity due to excess calories	CMS
E66.09	Other obesity due to excess calories	-
E66.1	Drug-induced obesity • Use additional code for adverse effect to identify the drug (T36-T50*)	-
E66.2	Morbid (severe) obesity with alveolar hypoventilation	CMS
E66.3	Overweight	-
E66.811	Obesity, class 1	-
E66.812	Obesity, class 2	-
E66.813	Obesity, class 3	CMS
E66.89	Other obesity not elsewhere classified	-
E66.9	Obesity, unspecified	-
E88.82	Obesity due to disruption of MC4R pathway	-
099.21*	Obesity complicating pregnancy *6 th character required: 0 - unspecified trimester 1 - first trimester 2 - second trimester 3 - third trimester 4 - childbirth 5 - puerperium	HHS
Z68.25 - Z68.29	Body mass index [BMI] 25-29, adult	-
Z68.30 - Z68.39	Body mass index [BMI] 30-39, adult	-
Z68.41	Body mass index [BMI] 40.0-44.9, adult	CMS
Z68.42	Body mass index [BMI] 45.0-49.9, adult	CMS
Z68.43	Body mass index [BMI] 50.0-59.9, adult	CMS
Z68.44	Body mass index [BMI] 60.0-69.9, adult	CMS
Z68.45	Body mass index [BMI] 70 or greater, adult	CMS

Additional Diagnoses to Consider

ICD-10-CM	Code Description	HCC Model
Z15.2	Genetic susceptibility to obesity	-
Z59.41	Food insecurity	-
Z59.48	Other specified lack of adequate food	-
Z71.3	Dietary counseling and surveillance	-
Z71.82	Exercise counseling	-
Z98.84	Bariatric surgery status	-
Z99.3	Dependence on wheelchair	-

*Additional characters needed to complete code