

Closing Gaps & Meeting Metrics

Coding Tips & Best Practices

November 2020

Cardiac Arrhythmia

Causes

Cardiac arrhythmias or *abnormal heartbeats* are caused by changes in heart tissue or activity, or when electrical impulses in the heart are erratic, too fast or too slow. These improperly working electrical impulses cause the heart to beat erratically, too fast or too slow. Heartbeat irregularities can prevent proper blood flow throughout the body. In addition, if left untreated, a cardiac arrhythmia can cause life-threatening complications such as stroke, heart failure or cardiac arrest.



Risk Factors

A number of risk factors may contribute to abnormal heartbeats. Certain health conditions and lifestyle habits can cause a cardiac arrhythmia to develop, some of which include:

- Consuming too much alcohol or caffeine
- Coronary artery disease
- Diabetes
- Family history and genetics
- High blood pressure
- Hypothyroidism/hyperthyroidism
- Race and ethnicity
- Sleep apnea
- Smoking and/or drug abuse
- Stress and/or anxiety
- Surgery



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Diagnostics

To confirm the diagnosis of a cardiac arrhythmia, heart-monitoring tests may be performed such as:

- Electrocardiogram
- Holter monitor
- Event recorder
- Echocardiogram
- Blood and urine tests
- Implantable loop recorder
- Stress test
- Tilt table tests
- Electrophysiological testing and mapping

Quality Alert

HEDIS requires patients diagnosed with clinical atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease to be on at least one high or moderate-intensity statin.



Documentation Guidance

When documenting a cardiac arrhythmia be sure to *always* include:

- Specificity
- Cause
- Location
- Treatment plan
- Acuity

Frequently Used ICD-10-CM Codes

- I47.0** Re-entry ventricular arrhythmia
- I47.1** Supraventricular tachycardia paroxysmal
- I47.2** Ventricular tachycardia paroxysmal
- I47.9** Paroxysmal tachycardia, unspecified
- I48.0** Paroxysmal atrial fibrillation
- I48.11** Longstanding persistent atrial fibrillation
- I48.19** Other persistent atrial fibrillation
- I48.20** Chronic atrial fibrillation, unspecified
- I48.21** Permanent atrial fibrillation
- I48.3** Typical atrial flutter
- I48.4** Atypical atrial flutter
- I48.91** Unspecified atrial fibrillation
- I48.92** Unspecified atrial flutter
- I49.01** Ventricular fibrillation

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Types of Cardiac Arrhythmias

Atrial Fibrillation

Atrial fibrillation occurs when the heart's two upper chambers beat out of coordination with the heart's two lower chambers. This type of cardiac arrhythmia can increase the risk of strokes, heart failure and other heart-related complications.

Atrial Flutter

Atrial flutter occurs when the heart's upper chambers beat too quickly causing the heart to beat in a fast, regular rhythm.

A-V Node Dysfunction

A-V node dysfunction occurs when the heart's natural pacemaker does not function properly.

Bradycardia

Bradycardia is when the heart beats slower than the normal heart rate. The adult heart beats between 60 and 100 times a minute. With bradycardia, the heart beats fewer than 60 times per minute. An implanted pacemaker is one form of treatment for those who experience bradycardia.

Paroxysmal Supraventricular Tachycardia (PSVT)

PSVT occurs when a *short circuit* rhythm develops in the upper chamber of the heart. This causes a regular but rapid heartbeat that will start and stop suddenly.

Supraventricular Tachycardia (SVT)

SVT also known as paroxysmal supraventricular tachycardia is an abnormally fast heartbeat within the upper heart chambers. This can cause the heart to beat erratically.

Sick Sinus Syndrome/Sick Sinus Syndrome (SSS) with Pacemaker

SSS—also known as sinus node disease or sinus node dysfunction—is a group of cardiac arrhythmias in which the heart's natural pacemaker does not function properly. The sinus node produces a steady pace of controlled electrical impulses. When SSS occurs, these electrical impulses are abnormally paced. SSS plus cardio with pacemaker is still considered active.

Ventricular Fibrillation (V-fib)

V-fib occurs when the lower heart chambers contract in a rapid and uncoordinated manner. This may occur as a result of electrolyte abnormalities or as a result of ventricular tachycardia degenerating into V-fib. This form of arrhythmia commonly happens to people with heart disease from a prior heart attack.

Ventricular Tachycardia

Ventricular tachycardia occurs when the lower chambers of the heart beat too fast to pump well. When this happens the heart may not be able to effectively pump blood to the body and lungs because the chambers are out of sync with each other and do not have time to fill properly.

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Earn CEUs through Coding Webinars

Florida Blue offers on-demand webinars that provide detail about how to support diagnoses per Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services guidelines. These courses are updated for 2020 and are eligible for 1.5 continuing education unit credits each.

Topics include:

- Atrial fibrillation
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Major depression
- Mental health
- Rheumatoid arthritis



Register today at [availity.com](https://www.availity.com)¹.

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