

# Molina Healthcare Coding Education Sacroiliitis, unspecified



**Question:** Can sacroiliitis be diagnosed by exam alone, demonstrating pain near or around the SI joint?

**Answer:** No. Physical exam has not been shown to be specific for sacroiliitis.<sup>1</sup>

Diagnose by X-ray. Which must show:<sup>2</sup>

- Grade 2 bilaterally or
- Grade 3 unilaterally

X-Ray Grading for Sacroiliitis:

0. Normal
1. Suspicious changes
2. Minimal: small localized erosions or sclerosis, with no alteration of joint width
3. Unequivocal: erosions, sclerosis, widening, narrowing, or partial ankylosis
4. Severe: total ankylosis

## Documentation Examples:

- **Assessment:** LBP with XR showing Grade 2 bilat changes for sacroiliitis.
  - **HCC/ICD-9 Code: 720.2 Sacroiliitis, unspecified**
  - **ICD-10 Code: M46.1 Sacroiliitis, not elsewhere classified**

**Plan:** If pain persists, will change meds.

OR

- **Assessment:** Pt with chronic sacroiliitis, NSAIDS not helping much.
  - **HCC/ICD-9 Code: 720.2 Sacroiliitis, unspecified**
  - **ICD-10 Code: M46.1 Sacroiliitis, not elsewhere classified**

**Plan:** Refer to rheumatologist to consider anti-TNF agent.

<sup>1</sup>"Diagnosis and differential diagnosis of ankylosing spondylitis in adults" Yu, David, Aug 2013

<sup>2</sup>UpToDate: "Undifferentiated spondyloarthritis, including peripheral and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis, including peripheral and non-radiographic axial spondyloarthritis" Yu, David Lit review current through Aug 2013

Have Questions?

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