

HEDIS® Tips:

Use of Imaging Studies for Low Back Pain (LBP)

MEASURE DESCRIPTION

The percentage of patients 18-50 years of age with a new primary diagnosis of low back pain in an outpatient or ED visit who did not have an imaging study (plain x-ray, CT scan, or MRI) within 28 days of the primary diagnosis.

A higher score indicates appropriate treatment of low back pain (i.e., the proportion for whom imaging studies did not occur).

Exclusions:

- Patients with a diagnosis of low back pain during the 180 days prior to the Index Episode Start Date (IESD = earliest date of service with a principal diagnosis of low back pain).
- Cancer any time during the member's history through 28 days after the IESD.
- Recent trauma any time during the 3 months prior to the IESD through 28 days after the IESD.
- IV drug abuse any time during the 12 months prior to the IESD through 28 days after the IESD.
- Neurologic impairment any time during the 12 months prior to the IESD through 28 days after the IESD.
- HIV any time during the member's history through 28 days after the IESD.
- Spinal infection any time during the 12 months prior to the IESD through 28 days after the IESD.
- Major organ transplant any time in the member's history through 28 days after the IESD.
- Prolonged use of corticosteroids – 90 consecutive days of corticosteroids treatment within 365 days prior to IESD.

CODES INCLUDED IN THE CURRENT HEDIS MEASURE

Codes to Identify Low Back Pain

Uncomplicated Low Back Pain	M47.26 - M47.28, M47.816 - M47.818, M47.896 - M47.898, M48.06 - M48.08, M48.061, M48.062, M51.16, M51.17, M51.26, M51.27, M51.36, M51.37, M51.86, M51.87, M53.2X6 - M53.2X8, M53.3, M53.86-M53.88, M54.16 - M54.18, M54.30 - M54.32, M54.40 - M54.42, M54.5, M54.89, M54.9, M99.03, M99.04, M99.23, M99.33, M99.43, M99.53, M99.63, M99.73, M99.83, M99.84, S33.100A, S33.100D, S33.100S, S33.110A, S33.110D, S33.110S, S33.120A, S33.120D, S33.120S, S33.130A, S33.130D, S33.130S, S33.140A, S33.140D, S33.140S, S33.5XXA, S33.6XXA, S33.8XXA, S33.9XXA, S39.002A, S39.002D, S39.002S, S39.012A, S39.012D, S39.012S, S39.092A, S39.092D, S39.092S, S39.82XA, S39.82XD, S39.82XS, S39.92XA, S39.92XD, S39.92XS

HOW TO IMPROVE HEDIS SCORES

- ☐ Avoid ordering diagnostic studies within 30 days of a diagnosis of new-onset back pain in the absence of red flags (e.g., cancer, recent trauma, neurologic impairment, or IV drug abuse).
- ☐ Provide patient education on comfort measures, e.g., pain relief, stretching exercises, and activity level.
- ☐ Use correct exclusion codes if applicable (e.g., cancer).
- ☐ Look for other reasons for visits for low back pain (e.g., depression, anxiety, narcotic dependency, psychosocial stressors, etc.).

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