

# Find and assign the appropriate codes for complications of care

# Complications vs Sequelae

Complications	Sequelae
<p>result from treatment for an illness or injury</p>	<p>residuals left after an illness or injury</p>
<p>a condition that is interrupting the healing of the initial injury or illness</p>	<p>a condition resulting from an injury or illness that is left after the acute phase of the initial injury or illness has resolved</p>

# Complication Guidelines

It is important to note that not all conditions that occur during or following medical care or surgery are classified as complications. There must be a cause-and-effect relationship between the care provided and the condition, and an indication in the documentation that it is a complication. Query the provider for clarification, if the complication is not clearly documented.

**Section I.B.16**

# Complication Guidelines

Intraoperative and postprocedural complication codes are found within the body system chapters with codes specific to the organs and structures of that body system. These codes should be sequenced first, followed by a code(s) for the specific complication, if applicable.

**Section I.C.19.g.5)**

As with certain other T codes, some of the complications of care codes have the external cause included in the code. The code includes the nature of the complication as well as the type of procedure that caused the complication. No external cause code indicating the type of procedure is necessary for these codes.

**Section I.C.19.g.4)**

# Joint Replacement Complication Tips

- Setting (i.e. home health versus the hospital) does NOT determine the appropriate 7th character. Whether the patient is receiving active treatment determines which 7th character is assigned.
- Only assign an additional code from the Z96.6- subcategory if the specific joint involved is not indicated in the complication code.
- Periprosthetic fractures, which are fractures that occur in the bones adjacent to the prosthesis, are no longer joint replacement complications. Instead, periprosthetic fracture codes are found in the M97.- category. However, a fracture of the prosthesis itself is coded as a joint prosthesis complication.

# Fracture

## Complication Guidelines

Care for complications of surgical treatment for fracture repairs during the healing or recovery phase should be coded with the appropriate complication codes.

**Section I.C.13.c & Section I.C.19.c.1)**

Care of complications of fractures, such as malunion and nonunion, should be reported with the appropriate 7th character for subsequent care with nonunion (K, M, N,) or subsequent care with malunion (P, Q, R).

**Section I.C.19.c.1)**