



START SMART CODING TIP

MS Coding

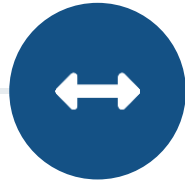
Key concepts for musculoskeletal coding

Key Concepts

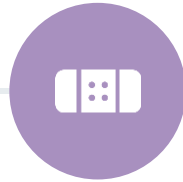
Five things to nail down on every musculoskeletal code



Anatomical Specificity



Laterality



Injuries vs. Diseases



Fracture Coding



Acute vs. Chronic



MS CODES OFTEN COMBINE

Condition + Site

Condition + Laterality

Condition + Severity

When multiple sites are involved, assign the appropriate code for **"multiple sites."**



PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO

Anatomical site + laterality

Type, status & etiology – acute vs. chronic, initial vs. subsequent encounter, traumatic vs. non-traumatic

Instructional notes – "code first," "code also," Excludes1 & Excludes2

7TH CHARACTER REVIEW

The 7th Character

When a 7th character is required – and when to check

● NOT EVERY CODE

Not every code in Chapter 13 or Chapter 19 carries a 7th character.

● USUALLY CHAPTER 19

7th characters are most often found in Chapter 19.

● S CODES • CH 19

Injuries & fractures – almost always need a 7th character.

● M CODES • CH 13

Diseases of the bone/muscle – 7th character used only in select categories.

Placeholder “X” Use “X” to fill empty character positions so a required 7th character lands in the 7th place.



EASY MNEMONIC

If it's an **injury event**, expect a 7th character.

If it's a **disease process**, check the Tabular section of ICD-10-CM.

Never assume!