

Aortic Dilation, Aortic Ectasia & Aortic Aneurysm

Diagnosis Overview:

Aortic dilation, Aortic Ectasia or Aortic aneurysm may be recommended for consideration when:

- Cardiology (echocardiogram) or Radiology (MRI, CT, plain film, ultrasound) state dilation, ectasia, or aneurysm in the findings or impression of a report **OR**
- Query if 4.0 cm or greater

NOTE: these size criteria are typically the threshold for considering serial imaging to monitor unrepaired, asymptomatic aortic dilation.

Diagnosis Types | Classes:

Aneurysms are categorized by location, with the most common types being cerebral, abdominal aortic, and thoracic aortic aneurysms.

Risk Factors:

Age
Smoking
HTN
Family History
Certain genetic or connective tissue disorders

Documentation Tips & Examples:

Active Management ("MEAT"):

Monitor

- Symptoms
- Disease progression/regression
- Ordering tests

Evaluate

- Test results
- Medication effectiveness
- Response to treatment
- Exam finding

Assess/Address

- Review records
- Counseling
- Documenting status

Treat

- Prescribe/continue medication/stopping
- Surgical/other interventions
- Referral to a specialist

Common Pitfalls:

- Nonspecific diagnosis
- Documentation and reported ICD-10 codes do not match
- Not enough information to indicate active assessment/management
- Not linking data/medications to the relevant condition in the assessment/plan.
- Not addressing both conditions when a single ICD-10 code represents a condition and its complication/manifestation (such as DM with CKD)
- Inappropriately coding acute conditions as chronic

Pearls:

- Arterial dilation is any enlargement beyond expected normal diameter. Arterial aneurysm is classically defined as dilation equal to or greater than 1.5 times normal diameter but monitoring and treatment is often indicated for portions of the aorta prior to meeting this definition. Ectasia is sometimes used to mean arterial dilation and sometimes it can mean abnormal shape (e.g. tortuous).
- When possible, try to assign specific ICD-10 codes based on the location of the dilation or aneurysm.