

Molina Healthcare Coding Education Major Depressive Episode



Accurately diagnosing **Major Depression** requires distinguishing between a single depressive episode and recurrent depression. Hence, it is necessary to identify and document the manifestations of the disease burden. Another key consideration is noting the term “chronic” can apply to both recurrent and single depressive episodes. A single or first time event should be coded as **F32.0-F32.9 (severity specification required)** and any patient who has experienced subsequent episodes should be coded as **F33.9**.

ICD-10: F32.0-F32.5 Major Depressive Disorder, single episode, *specifier required (e.g., mild; moderate; severe with or without psychotic symptoms; in partial or full remission)*

OR

ICD-10: F33.9 Major Depressive Disorder, **recurrent**, unspecified

Documentation Examples:

Initial Diagnosis:

65 year old Latina presenting with new onset depressive symptoms for past 2 months including daily depressed mood, loss of energy and inability to concentrate. PHQ9 score of 12 (moderate depression).

Assessment: Patient is newly diagnosed with major depression, single episode, moderate; needing medical and cognitive therapy

Plan: Start Citalopram 20 mg and refer for psychotherapy

- **ICD-10 Code:** F32.1 Major Depressive Disorder, single episode, moderate

OR

Initial Diagnosis:

73 year old female with many known episodes of Major Depression now complaining of worsening symptoms including increased loss of interest in activities, hypersomnia, increased tearfulness and sadness. Denies thoughts of self-harm

Assessment: Patient diagnosed with Major Depression, recurrent, unspecified; currently symptoms not controlled

Plan: Increase SSRI dosage and close follow-up recommended

- **ICD-10 Code:** F33.9, Major Depressive Disorder, recurrent, unspecified

The **Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9)** is a multipurpose instrument for screening, diagnosing, monitoring and measuring the severity of depression. It's a **diagnostic** measure for Major Depression as well as for recognizing sub-threshold depressive disorders. It can be administered repeatedly – reflecting improvement or worsening of depression in response to treatment.

**The codes used in this document are for illustrative purposes only*

Have Questions?

Contact: Ramp@MolinaHealthcare.com