AAVBC
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF VALUE BASED CARE

Hepatitis C

Quick Reference Guide

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1 CLINICAL SNAPSHOT

Definition: Chronic hepatitis C is a **persistent infection with hepatitis C virus (HCV)**, a single-stranded RNA virus of the Flaviviridae family, defined by **detectable HCV RNA for more than 6 months**.[1] Up to **85%** of acutely infected adults fail to clear the virus spontaneously and transition to chronic infection.[1] The natural history spans decades: approximately **20–30%** of untreated patients develop cirrhosis over **25–30 years**, with an annual hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) risk of **1–4%** and hepatic decompensation risk of **2–5%** once cirrhosis is established.[2] Chronic HCV is also a systemic disease — extrahepatic manifestations affect **40–74%**[3] of patients and include type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, mixed cryoglobulinemia, chronic kidney disease, and neurocognitive impairment in up to **50%**.[4]

ICD-10 Codes:

Active chronic infection: **B18.2** (chronic viral hepatitis C — only HCV code with HCC mapping). Acute infection: **B17.10** (without hepatic coma), **B17.11** (with hepatic coma). Cured/resolved: **Z86.19** (personal history of resolved infectious disease) — correct code after **SVR12**. Avoid **B19.20/B19.21** (unspecified) — these lose HCC 65 documentation entirely. Companion codes when present: **K74.60** (cirrhosis, unspecified), **K74.01/K74.02** (early/advanced hepatic fibrosis), **D89.1** (cryoglobulinemia).[5]

Prevalence and Burden: An estimated **2.4 million U.S. adults are living with HCV infection**, and approximately **60% or more remain unaware of their status**.[6] HCV prevalence in the Medicare population is around **3.5%**, concentrated in the **Baby Boomer cohort** (born 1945–1965) — particularly those exposed through unscreened blood products before 1992.[7] Despite **>95%** cure rates with current direct-acting antiviral (DAA) regimens, only **28%** of diagnosed Medicare beneficiaries initiated DAA treatment within **360 days** compared with **35%** of privately insured patients (aOR 0.62, **95%** CI 0.56–0.68).[8]

HCC/RAF V28 Mapping

ICD-10 CODE(S)	HCC CATEGORY (V28)	RAF (CNA)	DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENT
B18.2 (chronic HCV)	HCC 65 — Chronic Hepatitis	0.185	Active chronic HCV infection confirmed by HCV RNA positive for **>6 months**; document '**chronic hepatitis C**' **explicitly** — coders cannot assume chronicity[1]
B17.10/B17.11 (acute HCV)	No HCC	—	Acute infection **(<6 months)**; **does not map to HCC**. Document acute seroconversion