AAVBC
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF VALUE BASED CARE

Multiple Sclerosis

Quick Reference Guide

2026

Table of Contents

1 CLINICAL SNAPSHOT

Definition: **Multiple sclerosis** (MS) is a chronic, immune-mediated inflammatory and neurodegenerative disease of the central nervous system in which autoreactive T and B cells breach the blood-brain barrier and **drive demyelination**, **axonal loss**, and **astrocytic gliosis**.[1,2] It is the leading non-traumatic cause of neurological disability in young and middle-aged adults.[1] Four standardized phenotypes are recognized: **clinically isolated syndrome** (**CIS**), **relapsing-remitting** MS (**RRMS**, the most common form), **primary progressive** MS (**PPMS**), and **secondary progressive** MS (**SPMS**), each modified by descriptors for activity (clinical relapses or MRI activity) and progression (disability worsening independent of relapses).[1,3]

ICD-10 Codes:

MS is reported with **phenotype- and activity-specific subcodes**. **G35** is the multiple sclerosis category, now subdivided into **G35.A** (RRMS), **G35.B0/B1/B2** (PPMS: unspecified/active/ non-active), **G35.C0/C1/C2** (SPMS: unspecified/active/ non-active), and **G35.D** (MS, unspecified). **Activity status** (active = recent clinical relapse, new MRI lesions, or documented progression; non-active = clinically and radiologically stable) **must be documented** to support the active-vs-non-active subcodes.[4] Commonly co-occurring manifestations are **coded separately**: **H46.1-** (retrobulbar/optic neuritis, specify laterality), **G37.3** (acute transverse myelitis in demyelinating disease), **N31.-** (neurogenic bladder), **R13.1-** (dysphagia), **R26.-** (gait abnormality), **G31.84** (mild cognitive impairment), **F32.-/F33.-** (depressive disorder), **R53.83** (fatigue), and **R25.2/M62.83** (spasm/muscle spasm).[4] Do **not** code **G12.21** (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis; ALS) for MS **unless ALS is independently diagnosed**.

Prevalence and Burden: MS affects an estimated nearly **1 million** adults in the United States, with a female-to-male ratio of approximately **3:**[1].[1,5] Within the United States, prevalence increases significantly with latitude (r = 0.82) and ranges from ~161 per 100,000 in Hispanic populations to ~375 per 100,000 in White populations.[1,6] Although onset typically occurs between ages **20 and 40**, life expectancy is estimated at approximately 74–76 years (7–9 years shorter than the general population) and MS prevalence in Medicare beneficiaries ≥65 was 243 per 100,000 in 2021, increasing 15.5% over the prior decade.[1,7,8] The total per-person economic burden averages approximately **$88,000 per year** (2019 dollars), with direct medical costs of **~$65,600 per year**.[9]

HCC/RAF V28 Mapping

ICD-10 CODE(S)[10]	HCC CATEGORY (V28)[10]	RAF (CNA)[11]	DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENT[4]
G35.A Relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis	**HCC 198** Multiple Sclerosis	**0.647**	Document **relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis** (**RRMS**); include relapse history, current disease activity, MRI findings when available, and disease-modifying therapy