



Western Australian Coding Rule

0725/82 **Tibia and fibula fracture with fracture of medial malleolus**

WA Coding Rule 0413/06 *Tibia and fibula fracture with fracture of medial malleolus* is retired.

Ambiguous clinical documentation requires clarification to determine how many fractures are to be classified i.e. two fractures (tibia at medial malleolus level; fibula) or three fractures (distal tibia; medial malleolus; fibula).

See also ACS 0010 *Clinical documentation and general abstraction guidelines*.



Western Australian Coding Rule

0413/06 Tibia and fibula fracture with fracture of medial malleolus

Q.

Could the NCCH decision about the coding of fracture of distal tibia and fibula with fracture of medial malleolus be reviewed?

A.

A decision from the NCCH (8/02/2000) states:

Q. 'X-Ray report stated # distal tibia - medial malleolus and # distal fibula.

In the index under:

Fracture - tibia - - lower end (distal) - - - with fibula S82.31

also - - involving ankle or malleolus S82.5

S82.31 excludes medial malleolus S82.5. Does the medial malleolus code S82.5 cover both tibia and fibula or can we code both S82.5 and S82.31 to cover the fractured fibula.

A. 'When both the tibia and fibula are fractured, the index directs the clinical coder to assign a combined code. The exclusion at 'S82.31 Fracture of lower end of tibia with fracture of fibula (any part)' directs the coder to 'S82.5 Fracture of medial malleolus' if the medial malleolus is involved. The inclusion term under S82.5 states 'tibia involving ankle'. The ankle is the joint of the tibia, the talus and the fibula. Therefore, S82.5 does indicate both a fractured tibia and fibula and S82.31 should not be assigned as an additional code.

It is unclear whether this NCCH decision is referring to two fractures (one of the medial malleolus part of the distal tibia and one of the distal fibula) or three fractures (one of the distal tibia, one of the medial malleolus part of the distal tibia and one of the distal fibula), however, following the index the code assigned for both scenarios is the same.

The index should be followed carefully when coding this scenario. Looking up:

Fracture

- fibula

- - with tibia – see Fracture, tibia

leads the coder to:

Fracture



-tibia

- - with fibula (any part) NEC S82.21

When following the Index, a 'with' modifier always takes precedence over a site modifier but as the 'with fibula' modifier states NEC and the coder has more information that the fracture is distal, this leads the coder to look up:

Fracture

-tibia

- - lower end (alone) (distal) S82.38

- - - with fibula (any part) S82.31

Looking up the code in the Tabular, S82.31 excludes medial malleolus according to the excludes note under S82.3. This note directs the coder to assign the code S82.5 *Fracture of medial malleolus* instead. An additional code is not required to show the fractured fibula as the coder has arrived at S82.5 by following the index and tabular instructions.

DECISION

Fracture of distal tibia, medial malleolus and distal fibula should be coded to S82.5 *Fracture of medial malleolus* by following the index and tabular instructions carefully.

[Effective 19 April 2013, ICD-10-AM/ACHI/ACS 7th Ed.]