

Risk Coding Tips and Tools

Alcoholic Hepatitis

ICD-10-CM Codes (2025)

- **K70.10** – Alcoholic hepatitis without ascites
- **K70.11** – Alcoholic hepatitis with ascites

Documentation Guidance

- Diagnosis specificity – always state **with or without ascites**
- Clinical evidence – include exam findings, labs, imaging, or biopsy results
- Status and severity – acute vs chronic, complications present

Documentation Errors to Avoid

- Using unspecified codes (e.g., K70.9 – Alcoholic liver disease, unspecified)
- Omitting ascites status
- Documenting “history of alcoholic hepatitis” when condition is current
- Failing to link comorbidities (e.g., cirrhosis, portal hypertension)

Physician Documentation Example

Example 1:

Physical Exam: Abdomen with palpable ascites and fluid shifts

Assessment/Plan: Patient with chronic alcoholic hepatitis with ascites. Monitoring liver function tests monthly. Counseled patient on abstinence and referred to hepatology.

Provider coded K70.11 – Alcoholic hepatitis with ascites 

Example 2:

Patient with history of alcoholic hepatitis, current elevated bilirubin 6.3. Initiated corticosteroid therapy. Hepatology referral provided.

Provider coded: Z87.19 – Personal history of alcoholic hepatitis 

Correct code: K70.10 – Alcoholic hepatitis without ascites. Due to active treatment 

American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases. (2025). *Alcohol-Associated Liver Disease*. <https://www.aasld.org/practice-guidelines/alcohol-associated-liver-disease>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2024, October 1). *ICD-10-CM official guidelines for coding and reporting, FY 2025 [PDF]*. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/fy-2025-icd-10-cm-coding-guidelines.pdf>

You can find this resource and others like it in the OHN Risk Coding Corner at
www.OrlandoHealth.com/Network/Resources.

You can also contact us at RiskCoding@OrlandoHealth.com for additional questions or support needs.