



Focus on Obesity and Protein-Calorie Malnutrition

March is National Nutrition Month

Facts about Body Mass Index (BMI)

Body Mass Index (BMI) can provide clinical information on a person's nutritional status. According to the World Health Organization, a BMI between 18.5 and 24.99 is considered within the normal range for Europid individuals, while the cutoff points are lower for Asian populations.¹

Pre-obesity, Obesity and Morbid Obesity

Pre-obesity is defined as a BMI between 25.0 and 29.99. These patients should be counseled on the risks of being overweight and developing obesity. Obesity is defined as a BMI >30. For patients who fall into this category and based on recommendations by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), CMS will cover preventive services and counseling for obesity, under a new HCPCS code, G0447 (Face-to-Face Behavioral Counseling for Obesity, 15 minutes).² Requirements for reimbursement include: alert and competent patients with BMI>30, counseling by primary care practitioner in primary care setting, dietary (nutritional) assessment, and intensive behavioral counseling and behavioral therapy to promote sustained weight loss through high-intensity interventions on diet and exercise. Multiple visits can be scheduled, according to the following protocol:

- Medicare covers a maximum of 22 intensive behavioral treatment (IBT) for obesity sessions in a 12-month period;
- One face-to-face visit every week for the first month;
- One face-to-face visit every other week for months 2–6; and one face-to-face visit every month for months 7–12, if the beneficiary meets the 3 kg (6.6 pounds) weight-loss requirement during the first six months.

Protein-Calorie Malnutrition

Although protein-calorie malnutrition can be defined as a BMI less than 18.5, significant mortality among the elderly is noted with a BMI less than 21.³ The prevalence of protein-calorie malnutrition varies depending on the clinical setting. Protein-calorie malnutrition is estimated at 4% in the community setting; 29% in subacute care facilities; 27% and 38% among the hospitalized elderly aged 60–79 and aged 80 and older, respectively; and 30–40% among those aged 70 years of age and older who have been hospitalized for over two weeks.³

Classification	BMI
	Principal Cutoff Points
Underweight	<18.50
Severe Malnutrition	<16.00
Moderate Malnutrition	16.00–16.99
Mild Malnutrition	17.00–18.49
Normal Range	18.50–24.99
Overweight	≥25.00
Pre-Obese	25.00–29.99
Obese	≥30.00
Obese Class I	30.00–34.99
Obese Class II	35.00–39.99
Obese Class III (Morbid Obesity)	≥40.00

ICD-9-CM Coding: Obesity⁴

- 278.00 Obesity, unspecified
- **278.01** Morbid obesity (BMI 40 or greater)
- 278.02 Overweight (BMI 25–29.9)
- **278.03** Obesity hypoventilation syndrome (OHS, Pickwickian syndrome)

BMI (adult over 20 years old)

- V85.0 below 19
- V85.1 19.0–24.9 Normal
- V85.2x 25.0–29.9 Overweight
- V85.3x 30.0–39.9 Obesity
- **V85.4x** 40 or greater Morbid obesity

ICD-10-CM Coding: Obesity⁵

- E66.01 Morbid (severe) obesity due to excess calories
- E66.09 Other obesity due to excess calories
- E66.1 Drug-induced obesity
- E66.2 Morbid (severe) obesity with alveolar hypoventilation (Pickwickian syndrome)
- E66.3 Overweight
- E66.8 Other obesity
- E66.9 Obesity, unspecified

ICD-9-CM Coding: Protein-Calorie Malnutrition⁴

- **262** Other severe protein-calorie malnutrition
- **263.0** Malnutrition of moderate degree
- **263.1** Malnutrition of mild degree
- **263.8** Other protein-calorie malnutrition
- **263.9** Unspecified protein-calorie malnutrition

ICD-10-CM Coding: Protein-Calorie Malnutrition⁵

- E43 Unspecified severe protein-calorie malnutrition
- E44.0 Moderate protein-calorie malnutrition
- E44.1 Mild protein-calorie malnutrition
- E46 Unspecified protein-calorie malnutrition

¹ "Intensive Behavioral Therapy (IBT) for Obesity," *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services*. Department of Health and Human Services, 7 Mar. 2012. Web. 14 Oct. 2014. <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prevention/PrevntionGenInfo/Downloads/MPS_QuickReferenceChart_1.pdf>.

² Berrington de Gonzalez A (December 2010). Body-Mass Index and Mortality among 46 Million White Adults. *N. Engl. J. Med.* 363 (23): 2211–9. (2010).

³ Nutritional Screening Survey in the UK in 2008 Hospitals, Care Homes and Mental Health Units, British Association of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition. 2009. www.bapen.org.uk.

⁴ *Optum ICD-9-CM for Physicians Professional 2015. Vols. 1&2*. Salt Lake City: 2014.

⁵ *Optum ICD-10-CM: The Complete Official Draft Set 2015*. Salt Lake City: 2014.