

Evaluation and E/M Services Level of Medical Decision Making (MDM)

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Practice
Management
Center

Level of MDM (Based on 2 out of 3 Elements of MDM)	Number and Complexity of Problems Addressed	Amount and/or Complexity of Data to be Reviewed and Analyzed <i>*Each unique test, order, or document contributes to the combination of 2 or combination of 3 in Category 1 below</i>	Risk of Complications and/or Morbidity or Mortality of Patient Management
Straightforward	Minimal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 self-limited or minor problem	Minimal or none	Minimal risk of morbidity from additional diagnostic testing or treatment
Low	Low <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 or more self-limited or minor problems; or<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 stable chronic illness; or<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 acute, uncomplicated illness or injury• 1 stable, acute illness; or<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 acute, uncomplicated illness or injury requiring hospital inpatient or observation level of care	Limited (<i>Must meet the requirements of at least 1 of the 2 categories</i>) Category 1: Tests and documents Any combination of 2 from the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of prior external note(s) from each unique source*;• Review of the result(s) of each unique test*;• Ordering of each unique test* or Category 2: Assessment requiring an independent historian(s) <i>(For the categories of independent interpretation of tests and discussion of management or test interpretation, see moderate or high)</i>	Low risk of morbidity from additional diagnostic testing or treatment
Moderate	Moderate <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 or more chronic illnesses with exacerbation, progression, or side effects of treatment; or<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 or more stable chronic illnesses; or<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 undiagnosed new problem with uncertain prognosis;• 1 acute illness with systemic symptoms; or<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 acute complicated injury	Moderate (<i>Must meet the requirements of at least 1 out of 3 categories</i>) Category 1: Tests, documents, or independent historian(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any combination of 3 from the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of prior external note(s) from each unique source*;• Review of the result(s) of each unique test*;• Ordering of each unique test*;• Assessment requiring an independent historian(s) or Category 2: Independent interpretation of tests <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independent interpretation of a test performed by another physician/other qualified health care professional (not separately reported); or Category 3: Discussion of management or test interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion of management or test interpretation with external physician/other qualified health care professional/appropriate source (not separately reported)	Moderate risk of morbidity from additional diagnostic testing or treatment <i>Examples only:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prescription drug management• Decision regarding minor surgery with identified patient or procedure risk factors• Decision regarding elective major surgery without identified patient or procedure risk factors• Diagnosis or treatment significantly limited by social determinants of health
High	High <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 or more chronic illnesses with severe exacerbation, progression, or side effects of treatment; or<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 acute or chronic illness or injury that poses a threat to life or bodily function	Extensive (<i>Must meet the requirements of at least 2 out of 3 categories</i>) Category 1: Tests, documents, or independent historian(s) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any combination of 3 from the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of prior external note(s) from each unique source*;• Review of the result(s) of each unique test*;• Ordering of each unique test*;• Assessment requiring an independent historian(s) or Category 2: Independent interpretation of tests <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independent interpretation of a test performed by another physician/other qualified health care professional (not separately reported); or Category 3: Discussion of management or test interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion of management or test interpretation with external physician/other qualified health care professional/appropriate source (not separately reported)	High risk of morbidity from additional diagnostic testing or treatment <i>Examples only:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug therapy requiring intensive monitoring for toxicity• Decision regarding elective major surgery with identified patient or procedure risk factors• Decision regarding emergency major surgery• Decision regarding hospitalization or escalation of hospital-level care• Decision not to resuscitate or to de-escalate care because of poor prognosis• Decision regarding parenteral controlled substances

For more information, see: aad.org/practicecenter



*The level of MDM is determined by a combination of the three elements. Qualifying for a specific code requires that two of the three elements for that level of MDM be met or exceeded.

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