

H0600. Bowel Patterns

Enter Code

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Constipation present?

- 0. No
- 1. Yes

Item Rationale

Health-related Quality of Life

- Severe constipation can cause abdominal pain, anorexia, vomiting, bowel incontinence, and delirium.
- If unaddressed, constipation can lead to fecal impaction.

Planning for Care

- This item identifies residents who may need further evaluation of and intervention on bowel habits.
- Constipation may be a manifestation of serious conditions such as
 - dehydration due to a medical condition or inadequate access to and intake of fluid, and
 - side effects of medications.

DEFINITION

CONSTIPATION

If the resident has two or fewer bowel movements during the 7-day look-back period or if for most bowel movements their stool is hard and difficult for them to pass (no matter what the frequency of bowel movements).

Steps for Assessment

1. Review the medical record for bowel records or flow sheets, nursing assessments and progress notes, physician history and physical examination to determine if the resident has had problems with constipation during the 7-day look-back period.
2. Residents who are capable of reliably reporting their continence and bowel habits should be interviewed. Speak with family members or significant others if the resident is unable to report on bowel habits.
3. Ask direct care staff who routinely work with the resident on all shifts about problems with constipation.

DEFINITION

FECAL IMPACTION

A large mass of dry, hard stool that can develop in the rectum due to chronic constipation. This mass may be so hard that the resident is unable to move it from the rectum. Watery stool from higher in the bowel or irritation from the impaction may move around the mass and leak out, causing soiling, often a sign of a fecal impaction.

H0600: Bowel Patterns (cont.)

Coding Instructions

- **Code 0, no:** if the resident shows no signs of constipation during the look-back period.
- **Code 1, yes:** if the resident shows signs of constipation during the look-back period.

Coding Tips and Special Populations

- Fecal impaction is caused by chronic constipation. Fecal impaction is not synonymous with constipation.

SECTION I: ACTIVE DIAGNOSES

Intent: The items in this section are intended to code diseases that have a direct relationship to the resident's current functional status, cognitive status, mood or behavior status, medical treatments, nursing monitoring, or risk of death. One of the important functions of the MDS assessment is to generate an updated, accurate picture of the resident's current health status.