Volume 5 , Issue 6 , June 2018

Amerigroup
An Anthem Company

Risk Adjustment Coding Academy- Coding Focus

Aneurysm

Overview

An aneurysm occurs when layers in the wall of an artery weaken creating an abnormal bulge.[1] Aneurysms may form at any age and are more common in men than women. Aneurysms can occur in any part of the body, however one of the most common areas is the aorta, which is the largest vein in the body. According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 13,000 Americans die from aortic aneurysms each year mostly resulting from a rupture or dissection.[2]

There are two types of aortic aneurysms: thoracic and abdominal. Thoracic aneurysms occur in the upper area of the aorta, whereas an abdominal aneurysm occurs in the lower area of the aorta. Once developed, an aneurysm can cause blood to leak into the artery walls, known as dissection or it can completely burst resulting in a rupture.

Signs and Symptoms

Depending on the type and location of an aortic aneurysm, signs and symptoms may vary. An aneurysm can develop for years without causing any complication until it ruptures, grows large enough to place pressure on surrounding body parts, or obstructs blood flow which may become life-threatening. If an aneurysm quickly expands or ruptures, the sudden onset of symptoms may include (not all-inclusive):

- Nausea and vomiting
- Pain
- Dizziness
- Rapid Heart Rate

Causes and Treatment

The cause of an aneurysm may be unknown, however certain risk factors may impact the type of aneurysm one may experience. The most common risk factors for an aortic aneurysm are diseases that can damage the heart and blood vessels, inherited connective tissue disorders, unhealthy diet, and social behavior of smoking and drug use.

Treatment options depend upon multiple factors including the type, appearance, and location of an aneurysm. Angiograms, CT scans, and ultrasounds are common tests performed to diagnose an aneurysm.[3] Once diagnosed, treatment options may include medication or surgery and in some instances both. Treatment may not be required for aneurysms that are found early and are not causing symptoms; whereas, those with emergent symptoms need to seek immediate medical attention.

Coding Guidance

Chapter 9 of the ICD-10-CM contains codes related to diseases of the circulatory system for which the subtopic of aneurysms is listed.[4] To properly code an aneurysm, documentation must specify the type, location, size, whether or not a rupture has occurred, and if it has been repaired. Documentation of such detail is needed; coders cannot make assumptions. Aortic aneurysms with or without rupture are coded from ICD-10-CM category I71.

I71 Aortic Aneurysm

With Rupture (HCC 107)
I71.1 – Thoracic aortic aneurysm, ruptured
I71.3 – Abdominal aortic aneurysm, ruptured
I71.5 – Thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm, ruptured
I71.8 – Aortic aneurysm of unspecified site, ruptured

Without Rupture (HCC 108)
I71.2 – Thoracic aortic aneurysm, without rupture
I71.4 – Abdominal aortic aneurysm, without rupture
I71.6 – Thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm, without rupture
I71.9 – Aortic aneurysm of unspecified site, without rupture

Resources:

[1] Health Line. (n.d.) Aneurysm: Causes, Symptoms, & Diagnosis. Accessed May 11, 2018 from healthline.com
[2]National Heart, Lung, and Blood (n.d.) Aneurysm. Accessed May 24, 2018 from www.nhlbi.nlm.nih.gov
[3] American Heart Association (n.d.). What is an Aneurysm? Accessed May 14, 218 from heart.org
[4] Schmidt, A. & Patterson, L. (2018). ICD-10-CM Expert for Physicians. Optum Insight Inc.