

This document is a short example on how to successfully pass the AAPC CPC exam.

Coding to pass the exam is completely different than coding for the reimbursement cycle. This concept eludes many who take the exam.

The first thing to realize is that the AAPC gives you the correct answer in every exercise, except for the CASE STUDIES. That means 90 out of 100 of the questions are multiple choice.

With this thought in mind, what that really means is that you do not need to start coding from the alphabetic index, except for the case studies, which compel you to find the codes.

There are a total of 100 questions and you have 4.5 hours to complete them. If you do the math that means you have 2 minutes and 42 seconds to answer each question, so time is of the essence.

In each exercise look first at the codes to determine the pattern. Our brains are built to identify patterns when it comes to numbers and letters so start there. Once you have ID'd the pattern, then read the documentation for the exercise.

By looking for patterns first and then reading the documentation you are helping your brain overcome false impressions and mistaken understandings.

Each exercise ends with a question. Pay close attention to exactly what the question is asking because it may be different than what you may consider to be the correct path to the code(s) needed.

Now look again at the answers. There will be four, multiple choice answers to choose from.

You begin by looking at the codes in each COLUMN, not each row, and using a process of elimination.

Look at this example:

A 27-year-old was frying chicken when an explosion of the oil had occurred and she sustained second-degree burns on her face (5%), third degree burns on both hands (5%). There was a total of 10 percent of the body surface that was burned.

Select which ICD-10-CM codes are reported.

T20.20XA, T23.301A, T23.302A, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.11, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.601A, T23.602A, T20.60XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

When most people see this type of exercise they become stressed and anxious. Don't allow that to happen to you. Just follow what I am showing you and you will become more confident and the stress and anxiety will be relieved.



COLUMN ONE

T20.20XA, T23.301A, T23.302A, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.11, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.601A, T23.602A, T20.60XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

Notice that in column 1 there are only 3 ICD-10-CM codes to choose from. Only one code can be correct.

The patient suffered 2nd and 3rd degree burns. 3rd degree burns are the most severe so they are coded first. The patient suffered those 3rd degree burns on their hands.

In this column code T23.301A is the correct choice because this code identifies 3rd degree burns of the right hand.

Making that choice eliminates options A and C, because those are the wrong codes. Now move on to column two.



COLUMN TWO

T20.20XA, T23.301A, T23.302A, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.11, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.601A, T23.602A, T20.60XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

Because options A and C have already been eliminated the coding choice for this column is the same. ICD-10-CM code T23.302A is 3rd degree burn of the left hand.

So far, so good. Now on to column 3.



COLUMN THREE

T20.20XA, T23.301A, T23.302A, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.11, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.601A, T23.602A, T20.60XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

We are now ready to code for the 2nd degree burn on the patient's face. Because we have already eliminated choices A and C, the correct coding assignment is T20.20XA. So we are still on track for the correct answer. Now move to column 4.



COLUMN FOUR

T20.20XA, T23.301A, T23.302A, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.11, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.601A, T23.602A, T20.60XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA, Y93.G3

There are two codes to choose from in this column. The correct choice is T31.10. (10-19% body surface area burned, with 0-9% 3rd degree burns).

You are done coding because the last two codes (columns 5 and 6) are the same. The correct choice for this exercise is "D."

T23.301A, T23.302A, T20.20XA, T31.10, X10.2XXA and Y93.G3

By following this technique you can answer most of the multiple choice exercises correctly in the shortest amount of time. Once again the correct technique for this exercise is column by column, choosing the correct code for each column and eliminating the other choices.

My name is Jon Knight. I've been a medical coder since 1986. I became certified as a CPC in 2006. I have worked in every conceivable coding environment, for both insurance companies and healthcare providers. I have taught the trade – medical insurance billing and coding – at the professional college level since 2010.

I am now semi-retired and spend time tutoring those who desire to become certified through the AAPC as an out patient coder.

The competition charges as much as \$75 per hour for that service. I charge less than half of that for the same thing.

If you are ready to continue your coding journey and become a Certified Professional Coder I am here to assist you. Just call my business partner at the following number to get started. I look forward to helping you succeed in your certification journey.

Call Or Text Miss Patricia Now To Get Started (480) 809-7167

All instruction is provided online, via Zoom. We schedule sessions based upon YOUR need, on YOUR schedule. Call or text now!