



ICD-10-CM Coding Guidance for Traumatic Brain Injury

DoD TBI Definition

A traumatically induced structural injury or physiological disruption of brain function as a result of external force that is indicated by new onset or worsening of at least one of the following clinical signs immediately following the event:

- Any alteration in mental status (e.g., confusion, disorientation, slowed thinking, etc.)
- Any loss of memory for events immediately before or after the injury
- Any period of loss of or a decreased level of consciousness, observed or self-reported

External forces may include any of the following events: the head being struck by an object, the head striking an object, the brain undergoing an acceleration/deceleration movement without direct external trauma to the head or forces generated from events such as a blast or explosion, including penetrating injuries. (Department of Defense, 2015)

Severity of TBI

The level of injury is based on the status of the patient at the time of injury based on observable signs. Severity of injury does not predict functional or rehabilitative outcome of the patient.

Mild	Moderate	Severe
Normal structural imaging	Normal or abnormal structural imaging	Normal or abnormal structural imaging
LOC = 0 – 30 min	LOC >30 min and <24 hours	LOC >24 hours
AOC = a moment up to 24 hours	AOC >24 hours. Severity based on other criteria	
PTA = 0 – 1 day	PTA >1 and <7 days	PTA >7 days

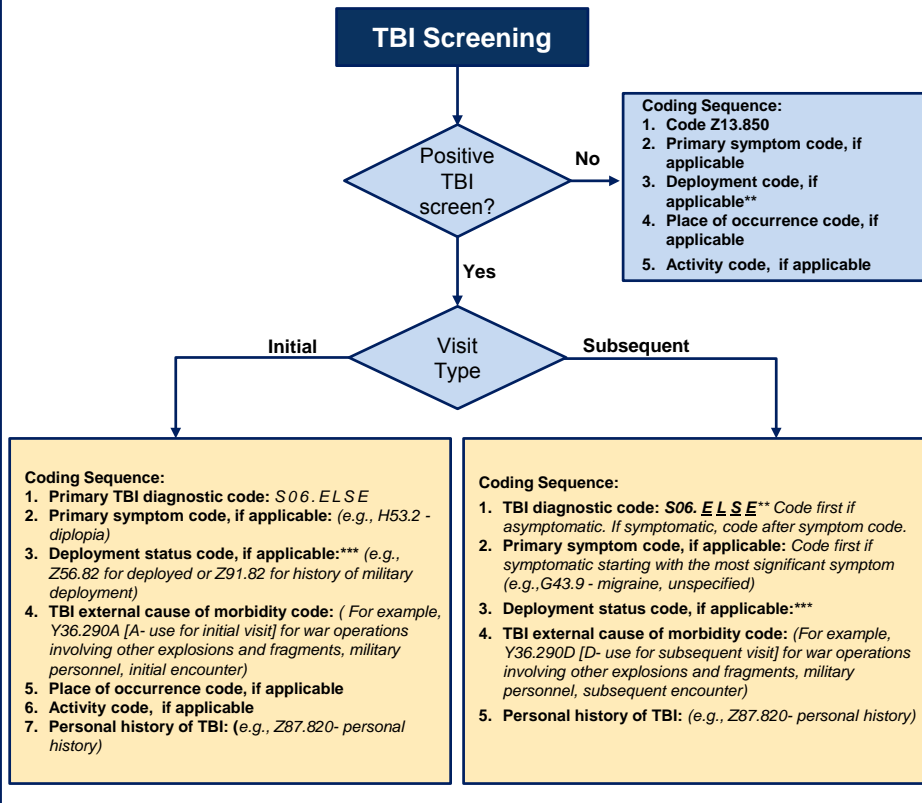
AOC – Alteration of consciousness/mental state
 LOC – Loss of consciousness
 PTA – Post-traumatic amnesia

* Military Acute Concussion Evaluation 2

** Etiology, Location, Severity, Encounter

*** Deployment code must fall within the first four codes when applicable

Medical Provider Screening and Diagnostic Coding



Rehabilitation Provider Diagnostic Coding

Use this coding sequence for initial and subsequent visits:

- Primary symptom code:** Code for the presenting complaint (e.g., R41.844 for frontal lobe and executive function deficit)
- TBI diagnosis code:** S06. E L S E** (Use A for initial visit, D for subsequent visit, or S for sequela)
- Deployment code, if applicable:***** (e.g., Z56.82 for deployed personnel)
- TBI external cause of morbidity code:** (e.g., V40-V49 for motor vehicle accidents, Y36 for war operations, Y37 for military operations. Use A for the initial visit. For example, Y36.290A for war operations involving other explosions and fragments, military personnel, initial encounter)
- Other symptom codes, if applicable:** (e.g., R41.1 for anterograde amnesia)
- Personal history of TBI:** (e.g., Z87.820- personal history)



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Etiology, Location, Severity, Encounter (ELSE) Coding Structure			
Category: S06.XXXX (* Please see note)			
Etiology		Location	
0	Concussion		
1	Traumatic cerebral edema (diffuse or focal)	X	Placeholder
2	Diffuse TBI/diffuse axonal injury	0	Not otherwise specified (NOS)
3	Focal TBI	1	Right
4	Epidural hemorrhage/extradural hemorrhage (NOS or traumatic)	2	Left
5	Traumatic subdural hemorrhage		
6	Traumatic subarachnoid hemorrhage		
Severity		Encounter	
0	No loss of consciousness (LOC)	A	Initial
1	LOC ≤ 30 minutes	D	Subsequent
2	LOC 31 to 59 minutes	S	Sequelae
3	LOC 1 hour to 5 hours 59 minutes		
4	LOC 6 hours to 24 hours		
5	LOC ≥ 24 hours with return to pre-existing conscious level		
6	LOC > 24 hours without return to pre-existing conscious level with patient surviving		
7	LOC of any duration with death due to brain injury prior to regaining consciousness		
8	LOC of any duration with death due to other cause prior to regaining consciousness		
9	LOC of unspecified duration		

* Note: Concussion can only be coded zero (0), one (1) or nine i.e. S06.0X0A, S06.0X1XD S06.0X9XS

Code for Personal History of TBI		
Code	Short Narrative	Long Narrative
Z87.820	Personal hx, TBI, unknown	Personal history of traumatic brain injury (TBI), highest level of severity unknown

Source: MHS Professional Services and Specialty Medical Coding Guidelines, Version 5.0, Joint Coding Guidance Working Group, April 2015

TBI Screening Code	
Z13.850	Screen, TBI

Deployment Status Code	
Z56.82	Currently deployed (TBI occurred in theater)
Z91.82	History of deployment

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Commonly Used Codes for Symptoms Associated with TBI	
Location Codes: 1 = Right 2 = Left 3 = Bilateral	
Cognitive/Linguistic	
R41.1	Anterograde amnesia
R41.0	Disorientation, unspecified
R41.2	Retrograde amnesia
R41.840	Attention and concentration deficit (excludes ADHD)
R41.841	Cognitive communication deficit
R41.842	Visuospatial deficit
R41.843	Psychomotor deficit
R41.844	Frontal lobe and executive function deficit
R47.01	Aphasia (excludes aphasia following CVA)
Hearing	
H91.90	Unspecified hearing loss, unspecified ear (add location code as 5th character)
H93.19	Tinnitus, unspecified ear (add location code as 5th character)
H93.239	Hyperacusis, unspecified ear
Neurologic	
H81.49	Vertigo of central origin, unspecified ear (add location code as 5th character)
H81.9	Unspecified disorder of vestibular function
H81.39	Other peripheral vertigo
H81.4	Vertigo of central origin
F07.81	Postconcussional syndrome
G43.001	Migraine without aura, not intractable with status migrainosus (G43.009) without status migrainosus
G43.101	Migraine with aura, not intractable with status migrainosus (G43.109) without status migrainosus
G43.701	Chronic migraine without aura, not intractable with status migrainosus (G43.709) without status migrainosus
G43.711	Chronic migraine without aura, intractable with status migrainosus (G43.719) without status migrainosus
G43.901	Migraine, unspecified, not intractable with status migrainosus (G43.909) without status migrainosus
G43.911	Migraine, unspecified, intractable with status migrainosus (G43.919) without status migrainosus
G44.201	Tension-type headache, unspecified, intractable (G44.209) not intractable (G44.211) episodic, intractable (G44.219) episodic, not intractable or (G44.221) chronic, intractable (G44.229) chronic, not intractable
G44.301	Post-traumatic headache, unspecified, intractable (G44.309) not intractable
G44.311	Acute post-traumatic headache, unspecified, intractable (G44.319) not intractable
G44.321	Chronic post-traumatic headache, unspecified, intractable
G44.329	Chronic post-traumatic headache, unspecified, not intractable
G44.84	Primary exertional headache
G44.89	Other headache syndrome, (102) with MCC, (103) without MCC
R42	Dizziness and giddiness
R43.0	Anosmia

Commonly Used Codes for Symptoms Associated with TBI	
Location Codes: 1 = Right 2 = Left 3 = Bilateral	
Emotional/Behavioral	
F10.10	Alcohol abuse, uncomplicated
F32.9	Major depressive disorder, single episode, unspecified
F41.1	Generalized anxiety disorder
F43.10	Post-traumatic stress disorder, unspecified
F43.0	Acute stress reaction
R45.0	Nervousness
R45.1	Restlessness and agitation
R45.3	Demoralization and apathy
R45.4	Irritability and anger
R45.5	Hostility
R45.86	Emotional lability
R45.87	Impulsiveness
R45.89	Other signs and symptoms involving emotional state
Sleep	
G47.00	Insomnia, unspecified
G47.01	Insomnia due to a medical condition
G47.33	Obstructive sleep apnea, adult and pediatric
G47.20	Circadian rhythm sleep disorder (CRSD), unspecified type. (G47.21) CRSD delayed sleep phase type or (G47.22) advanced sleep phase type
G47.9	Sleep disorder, unspecified
Vision	
H51.11	Convergence insufficiency
H52.5	Accommodative dysfunction
H53.149	Visual discomfort, unspecified (add location code as 6th character)
H53.19	Photophobia* (other subjective visual disturbance)
H53.2	Diplopia
H53.30	Disorders of binocular vision
H53.40	Visual field defects, unspecified
H53.8	Other visual disturbances
H54	Blindness and low vision
H55	Nystagmus and irregular eye movements
Other	
R11.0	Nausea (R11.1) vomiting
R51	Headache
M79.2	Neuralgia and neuritis, unspecified
R53.81	Other malaise, (53.82) Chronic fatigue or (53.83) Other fatigue

* Photophobia has no specific coding under ICD10. Photophobia can be coded using H53.19. Other subjective visual disturbances. Utilizing this coding methodology, H53.19 in the context of TBI will be interpreted as photophobia for surveillance and analysis purposes.