



Cancer Reporting in California

Appendix A Terms and Definitions

California Cancer Reporting System Standards, Volume I: Abstracting and Coding Procedures

Twenty-First Edition

Version 1.0, January 2021

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Appendix A: Terms and Definitions

This page was created to capture terms and definitions often used in abstracting.

Active Surveillance/Active Monitoring/Deferred Therapy/Expectant Management/Watchful Waiting

These are terms that denote a treatment plan that involves closely watching a patient's condition but not giving any treatment unless there are changes in test results that show the condition is getting worse. Active surveillance may be used to avoid or delay the need for treatments such as radiation therapy or surgery, which can cause side effects or other problems. During active surveillance, certain exams and tests are done on a regular schedule. It may be used in the treatment of certain types of cancer, such as prostate cancer, urethral cancer, and intraocular (eye) melanoma. It is a type of expectant management.

Adjuvant Therapy

Additional cancer treatment given after the primary treatment (usually surgery) to lower the risk that the cancer will come back. Adjuvant therapy may include radiation therapy and/or systemic therapy including chemotherapy, endocrine/hormone therapy, targeted therapy, immunotherapy, or biological therapy.

Allograft/Homograft

A tissue transplant from one person to another. This can include bone, tendons, ligaments, skin, and heart valves. Allograft and homograft are synonymous.

Antineoplastic Drugs

Applies to medications that prevent the development, maturation, or spread of cancer cells. Included are drugs for chemotherapy (see Section VI.4), hormonal treatment (see Section VI.5), and immunotherapy (see Section VI.6). For cases diagnosed 1/1/2005 forward, registrars must use SEER*Rx, for coding systemic treatment (i.e. chemotherapy, hormone therapy, and immunotherapy). SEER*Rx is the downloadable, interactive antineoplastic drug database that replaced the SEER Self-Instructional Manual Book 8, Antineoplastic Drugs. The software can be downloaded from the SEER*Rx Web Site.

Autograft

A graft of tissue from one point to another of the same individual's body. This can include bone, tendons, ligaments, skin, and heart valves.

Axillary Lymph Node Dissection (ALND, AXLND)

Surgery to remove lymph nodes found in the underarm (armpit) region.

Bone Marrow Transplant (BMT)

Procedure where bone marrow is used to restore stem cells that were destroyed by chemotherapy and/or radiation. Replacing the stem cells allows the patient to undergo higher doses of chemotherapy. The patient receives bone marrow or stem cells from a donor.

- **Allogeneic**
Bone marrow from a donor (includes haploidentical)
- **Autologous**
Bone marrow from patient's own bone marrow
- **Haploidentical**
Bone marrow that is half-matched
- **Syngeneic**
Bone marrow from an identical twin

Cancer Tissue

Proliferating malignant cells; an area of active production of malignant cells. Cancer tissue includes primary tumor and metastatic sites where the cancer tissue grows. Cells in fluid such as pleural fluid or ascetic fluid are not "cancer tissue" because the cells do not grow and proliferate in the fluid.

Cancer Treatment Vaccines

Therapeutic vaccines that work to boost the body's natural defenses to fight cancer.

Carcinomatosis

A condition in which cancer is spread widely throughout the body, or, in some cases, to a relatively large region of the body.

Common Law Marriage

A couple living together for a period of time and declaring themselves as married to friends, family and the community, having never gone through a formal ceremony or obtained a marriage license.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

Any medical system, practice, or product that is not thought of as "western medicine" or standard medical care. CAM treatments may include dietary supplements, megadose vitamins, herbal preparations, acupuncture, massage therapy, magnet therapy, spiritual healing, and meditation.

- **Alternative Medicine**
Treatment that is used instead of standard medical treatments. Alternative therapy is when the patient receives **no** other type of standard treatment.
- **Complementary Medicine**
Treatments that are used along with standard medical treatment but are not standard treatments; also called conventional medicine. One example is using acupuncture to help lessen some side effects of cancer treatment in conjunction with standard treatment.

Concurrent Therapy

A treatment that is given at the same time as another. Example: Chemotherapy and radiation therapy given at the same time.

Conditioning

High-dose chemotherapy with or without radiation administered prior to transplant such as BMT and stem cells to kill cancer cells. This conditioning also destroys normal bone marrow cells, so the normal cells need to be replaced (rescued). The high dose chemotherapy is coded in the Chemotherapy data item and the radiation is coded in the Radiation Treatment Modality--Phase I, II, III data items.

Consolidation Chemotherapy

Repetitive cycles of chemotherapy given immediately after the remission.

Definitive Cancer Treatment

Therapy that normally modifies, controls, removes, or destroys proliferating tumor tissue, whether primary or metastatic, even if it cannot be considered curative for a particular patient in view of the extent of disease, incompleteness of treatment, apparent lack of response, size of the dose administered, mortality during surgery, or other reason. The term excludes therapy that has no effect on malignant tissue. Procedures administered for the sole purpose of relieving symptoms are therefore not considered to be cancer treatment.

Direct Extension

A continuous infiltration or growth from the primary site into other tissue or organs (compare to metastasis).

Disease Recurrence

For solid tumors, see the Multiple Primary and Histology Coding Rules manual and for hematopoietic and lymphoid neoplasm see the Hematopoietic and Lymphoid Neoplasm Case Reportability and Coding manual and the Hematopoietic Database to determine disease recurrence.

Hematopoietic Growth Factors

A group of substances that support hematopoietic (blood cell) colony formation. The group includes erythropoietin, interleukin-3 and colony-stimulating factors (CSFs). The growth-stimulating substances are ancillary drugs and not coded.

Hospice

A program that provides special care for people who are near the end of life and for their families, either at home, in freestanding facilities, or within hospitals. Hospice care may include treatment that destroys or modifies cancer tissue. If performed as part of the first course, treatment that destroys or modifies cancer tissue is collected when given in a hospice setting. "Hospice, NOS" is not specific enough to be included as first course treatment.

Induction Chemotherapy

Initial intensive course of chemotherapy.

Integrative Medicine

A total approach to medical care that combines standard medicine with the [CAM](#) practices that have shown to be safe and effective. They treat the patient's mind, body and spirit.

Intersex

A person born with ambiguous reproductive or sexual anatomy; chromosomal genotype and sexual genotype other than XY-male and XX-female.

Invasion

Local spread of a neoplasm by infiltration into or destruction of adjacent tissue.

Lymph Node Dissection (LND)

Surgical procedure in which lymph nodes are removed and a sample of tissue is reviewed under microscope for signs of cancer.

Maintenance Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy given for a period of month or years to MAINTAIN REMISSION.

Metastasis

The dissemination of tumor cells from the primary site to a remote part of the body. It is important to distinguish metastatic lesions from new primaries. A metastatic lesion is not a primary tumor. Pathologic reports are usually the best source. The term "secondary" is sometimes used for a metastatic lesion. Since the lymphatic system is one of the main routes of metastasis, frequent reference will be found in examinations of the lymph nodes. Occurrence of a lesion in a lymph node ordinarily indicates metastasis.

Microinvasion

The earliest stage of invasion—as malignant, not "in-situ".

- **Microinvasive**

The earliest invasive stage. Applied to cervical cancer, describes a small cancer that has invaded the stroma to a limited extent. The FIGO stage is IA.

Neoadjuvant Therapy

Systemic treatment (chemotherapy, endocrine/hormone therapy, targeted therapy, immunotherapy, or biological therapy) and/or radiation therapy given prior to surgery to improve outcomes. Also referred to as pre-surgical treatment or preoperative treatment.

Non-Mass Enhancement (NME)

Enhancing abnormality that is not associated with the three-dimensional volume of a mass, shape and outlining.

Non-Myeloablative Therapy

Uses immunosuppressive drugs pre- and post-transplant to ablate (destroy) the bone marrow. These are not recorded as therapeutic agents.

Optune Treatment

Optune is a wearable, portable, FDA-approved treatment for glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) that creates low-intensity, wave-like electric fields called Tumor Treating Fields (TTFields), which interfere with GBM cell division. This action slows or stops GBM tumor cells from dividing and may destroy them.

Palliative Treatment

Treatment that may improve the quality of life by preventing or relieving suffering. Palliative treatment is non-curative or alleviates symptoms. If used for a procedure that is directed toward symptoms only, the therapy is not considered to be treatment.

Examples:

- Colostomy, removal of fluid—even if cancer cells are present—to ease pressure, neurosurgery to relieve pain.

Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Transplantation (PBSCT)

A procedure in which a patient receives healthy blood-forming cells (stem cells) to replace their own stem cells that have been destroyed by disease or by the radiation or high doses of anticancer drugs that are given as part of the procedure. The healthy stem cells may come from the blood of the patient or a donor. The procedure can be autologous, allogeneic, or syngeneic.

Primary Treatment

The centerpiece of treatment given for a disease. This treatment is often part of a standard set of treatments, such as surgical resection followed by chemotherapy and radiation. It may be used alone to reduce or remove the burden/progression of disease or used along with additional treatments.

Radical Lymph Node Dissection (RAD LND)

Surgical procedure to remove most or all of the lymph nodes that drain lymph from the area around the tumor.

Regional

Organs or tissues related to a site by physical proximity. Also applies to the first chain of lymph nodes draining the area of the site.

Regional Lymph Node Dissection (REG LND)

Surgical procedure that removes some of the lymph nodes that drain lymph from the area around a tumor.

Remission

The bone marrow shows normal cellular characteristics (is normocellular), with less than 5% blasts, no signs or symptoms of the disease, no signs or symptoms of central nervous system leukemia or other extramedullary infiltration, and all of the following laboratory values within normal limits: white blood cell count and differential, hematocrit/hemoglobin level, and platelet count.

Rescue

Rescue is the actual BMT or PBSCT done after conditioning.

Stem Cells

Immature cells found in bone marrow, blood stream, placenta and umbilical cords. The stem cells mature into blood cells.

Stem Cell Transplant

Procedure to replenish supply of healthy blood-forming cells. Also known as bone marrow transplant, depending on the source of the stem cells. For a Stem Cell Transplant cells are collected from the bone marrow and transplanted into the patient.

Surgical Procedure

Any surgical procedure coded in the data items: Surgery of Primary site, Scope of Regional Lymph Node Surgery, or Surgery of Other Regional or Distant Sites.

Surgical Resection

Removal of the malignant tumor completely with an appropriate margin of normal tissue. The extent of the required surgical margin varies with the type and location of the tumor.

Suspicious Cytology

A cytology report diagnosis that uses an ambiguous term which may constitute a diagnosis. See [Volume I](#) - Ambiguous Diagnostic Reportable Terms.

Systemic Therapy

Any of the following modalities given: Chemotherapy, hormone therapy, Biological response therapy/immunotherapy, bone marrow transplant, stem cell harvests, surgical and/or radiation endocrine therapy.

Targeted Therapy

Targeted cancer therapies are drugs or other substances that block the growth and spread of cancer by interfering with specific molecules that are involved in the growth, progression and spread of cancer. Targeted cancer therapies are sometimes called "molecularly targeted drugs", "molecularly targeted therapies", "precision medicines" or similar names.

Transgender

A person who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that differs from the one which corresponds to the person's sex at birth.

Transgendered Person

A person who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that differs from the one which corresponds to the person's sex at birth.

Transsexual

A person who has undergone (or is in the process of) surgical alteration to achieve gender opposite to their sex at birth, i.e. surgically altered gender.

Treatment

Procedures that destroy or modify primary (primary site) or secondary (metastatic) cancer tissue.

Treatment Failure

The treatment modalities did not destroy or modify the cancer cells. The tumor either became larger (disease progression) or stayed the same size after treatment.

Tumor Embolization

The intentional blockage of an artery or vein to stop the flow of blood through the desired vessel.

- **Chemoembolization**

A procedure in which the blood supply to the tumor is blocked surgically or mechanically and anticancer drugs are administered directly into the tumor. This permits a higher concentration of drug to be in contact with the tumor for a longer period of time.

- **Radioembolization**

Tumor embolization combined with injection of small radioactive beads or coils into an organ or tumor.

Tumor Markers

A tumor marker is a substance found in the blood, urine, or body tissues that can be elevated in cancer, among other tissue types. There are many different tumor markers, each indicative of a particular disease process, and they are used in oncology to help detect the presence of cancer.

Umbilical Cord Stem Cell Transplant

Treatment with stem cells harvested from umbilical cord blood.