

Other Medical Conditions

Definition/ cut-off value

Diseases or conditions with nutritional implications that are not included in any of the other medical conditions. The current condition, or treatment for the condition, must be severe enough to affect nutritional status. Includes, but not limited to:

- C juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA)
- C lupus erythematosus
- C cardiorespiratory diseases
- C heart disease
- C cystic fibrosis
- C persistent asthma (moderate or severe) requiring daily medication

Presence of medical condition(s) diagnosed by a physician as self reported by applicant/participant/caregiver; or as reported or documented by a physician, or someone working under physician's orders.

Participant category and priority level

Category	Priority
Pregnant Women	I
Breastfeeding Women	I
Non-Breastfeeding Women	III
Infants	I
Children	III

Justification

Juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) is the most common pediatric rheumatic disease and most common cause of chronic arthritis among children. JRA puts individuals at risk of anorexia, weight loss, failure to grow and protein energy malnutrition.

Lupus erythematosus is an autoimmune disorder that affects multiple organ systems. Lupus erythematosus increases the risk of infections, malaise, anorexia, and weight loss. In pregnant women, there is increased risk of spontaneous abortion and late pregnancy losses (after 28 weeks gestation).

Cardiorespiratory diseases affect normal physiological processes and can be accompanied by failure to thrive and malnutrition. Cardiorespiratory diseases put individuals at risk for growth failure and malnutrition due to low calorie intake and hypermetabolism.

Cystic fibrosis (CF), a genetic disorder of children, adolescents and young adults characterized by widespread dysfunction of the exocrine glands, is the most common lethal hereditary disease of the Caucasian race.

Justification (cont)

Many aspects of the disease of CF stress the status of the patient directly or indirectly by affecting the patient's appetite and subsequent intake. Gastrointestinal losses occur in spite of pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy. Also, catch-up growth requires additional calories. All of these factors contribute to a chronic energy deficit, which can lead to a marasmic type of malnutrition. The primary goal of nutritional therapy is to overcome this energy deficit.

Studies have shown variable intakes in the CF population, but the intakes are usually less than adequate and are associated with a less than normal growth pattern.

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disorder of the airways, which can cause recurrent episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and coughing of variable severity. Persistent asthma requires daily use of medication, preferably inhaled anti-inflammatory agents. Severe forms of asthma may require long-term use of oral corticosteroids which can result in growth suppression in children, poor bone mineralization, high weight gain and, in pregnancy, decreased birth weight of the infant. High doses of inhaled corticosteroids can result in growth suppression in children and poor bone mineralization. Untreated asthma is also associated with poor growth and bone mineralization and, in pregnant women, adverse birth outcomes such as low birth weight, prematurity, and cerebral palsy. Repeated asthma exacerbations ("attacks") can, in the short-term, interfere with eating, and in the long-term, cause irreversible lung damage that contributes to chronic pulmonary disease. Compliance with prescribed medications is considered to be poor. Elimination of environmental factors that can trigger asthma exacerbations (such as cockroach allergen or environmental tobacco smoke) is a major component of asthma treatment. WIC can help by providing foods high in calcium and vitamin D, in educating participants to consume appropriate foods and to reduce environmental triggers, and in supporting and encouraging compliance with the therapeutic regimen prescribed by the health care provider.

NOTE: This criterion will not usually be applicable to infants for the medical condition of asthma. In infants, asthma-like symptoms are usually diagnosed as bronchiolitis with wheezing which is covered under Criterion #352, Infections Diseases.

**Clarifications/
Guidelines**

Before assigning this risk code, be sure the specific medical condition is documented on the health history form.

Self-reporting of a diagnosis by a medical professional should not be confused with self-diagnosis, where a person simply claims to have or to have had a medical condition without any reference to professional diagnosis. A self-reported medical diagnosis ("My doctor says that I have/my son or daughter

**Clarifications/
Guidelines (cont)**

has...”) should prompt the CA to validate the presence of the condition by asking more pointed questions related to that diagnosis.

References

1. Institute of Medicine: WIC Nutrition Risk Criteria: A Scientific Assessment; 1996; pp. 185-187, 190-191.
 2. Queen, Patricia and Lang, Carol: Handbook of Pediatric Nutrition; 1993; pp. 422-425.
 3. National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute: Expert Panel Report 2: Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Management of Asthma; 1997; pp. 3, 20, 67-73.
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