

FROM THE PRESENTING PROBLEM TO THE CODE

The table shows how E/M codes can be based on the presenting problem. Background colors indicate where the same requirements for decision making, history or exam are found in multiple codes, and red text is used to emphasize where a 9920x code differs from the 9921x code to its left.

<p>99215</p> <p>Decision Making (presenting problem)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 1 Chronic illness with severe exacerbation, progression or side effects of treatment • Acute or chronic illness/injury threatening life or function (MI, pulmonary embolism, respiratory distress) • Abrupt neurologic status change (TIA, seizure, weakness, sensory loss) <p>Plus ...</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>History</td> <td style="text-align: center;">OR</td> <td>Exam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HPI: 4 elements</td> <td></td> <td>Comprehensive (general multisystem or complete single organ system)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ROS: 10 systems</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PFSH: 3 of 3*</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	History	OR	Exam	HPI: 4 elements		Comprehensive (general multisystem or complete single organ system)	ROS: 10 systems			PFSH: 3 of 3*			<p>99205</p> <p>Decision Making (presenting problem)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 1 Chronic illness with severe exacerbation, progression or side effects of treatment • Acute or chronic illness/injury threatening life or function (MI, pulmonary embolism, respiratory distress) • Abrupt neurologic status change (TIA, seizure, weakness, sensory loss) <p>Plus ...</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>History</td> <td style="text-align: center;">AND</td> <td>Exam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HPI: 4 elements</td> <td></td> <td>Comprehensive (general multisystem or complete single organ system)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ROS: 10 systems</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PFSH: 3 of 3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	History	AND	Exam	HPI: 4 elements		Comprehensive (general multisystem or complete single organ system)	ROS: 10 systems			PFSH: 3 of 3		
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<p>99214</p> <p>Decision Making (presenting problem)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Chronic illness with exacerbation • ≥ 2 Chronic stable illnesses • New problem of uncertain diagnosis • Acute illness with systemic symptoms • Acute complicated injury <p>Plus ...</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>History</td> <td style="text-align: center;">OR</td> <td>Exam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HPI: 4 elements</td> <td></td> <td>Detailed (affected area and related organ system)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ROS: 2-9 systems</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PFSH: 1 of 3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	History	OR	Exam	HPI: 4 elements		Detailed (affected area and related organ system)	ROS: 2-9 systems			PFSH: 1 of 3			<p>99204</p> <p>Decision Making (presenting problem)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Chronic illness with exacerbation • ≥ 2 Chronic stable illnesses • New problem of uncertain diagnosis • Acute illness with systemic symptoms • Acute complicated injury <p>Plus ...</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>History</td> <td style="text-align: center;">AND</td> <td>Exam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HPI: 4 elements</td> <td></td> <td>Comprehensive (general multisystem or complete single organ system)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ROS: 10 systems</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PFSH: 3 of 3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	History	AND	Exam	HPI: 4 elements		Comprehensive (general multisystem or complete single organ system)	ROS: 10 systems			PFSH: 3 of 3		
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<p>99213</p> <p>Decision Making (presenting problem)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 2 Self-limited problems • 1 Stable chronic illness • Acute uncomplicated illness (cystitis, sprain) <p>Plus ...</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>History</td> <td style="text-align: center;">OR</td> <td>Exam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HPI: 1-3 elements</td> <td></td> <td>Expanded problem focused</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ROS: Pertinent</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	History	OR	Exam	HPI: 1-3 elements		Expanded problem focused	ROS: Pertinent			<p>99203</p> <p>Decision Making (presenting problem)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 2 Self-limited problems • 1 Stable chronic illness • Acute uncomplicated illness (cystitis, sprain) <p>Plus ...</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>History</td> <td style="text-align: center;">AND</td> <td>Exam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HPI: 4 elements</td> <td></td> <td>Detailed (affected area and related organ system)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ROS: 2-9 systems</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>PFSH: 1 of 3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	History	AND	Exam	HPI: 4 elements		Detailed (affected area and related organ system)	ROS: 2-9 systems			PFSH: 1 of 3					
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* The documentation guidelines require only 2 of 3 here, but since this is the only difference between the requirements for 99215 and for a 99205, we're opting for consistency and ease of memorization.

Key: HPI: History of present illness; PFSH: Past, family and social history; ROS: Review of systems