

QA Matters: Multiple Primary Coding Changes for Prostate Cancer (2025)

September 2025

Beginning with diagnosis year 2025, a new multiple primary rule was implemented for prostate cancers. The change allows for multiple primaries in a limited circumstance involving small cell carcinoma of the prostate. While this change is expected to affect very few cases, registrars should be aware of the updated rules when abstracting prostate primaries diagnosed in 2025 and later.

This QA Matters brief summarizes the 2025 multiple primary coding changes for prostate cancer and provides guidance for applying the updated rules.

Key Points

- **Beginning with diagnosis year 2025, new multiple primary rules apply to prostate cancers.**
- **Acinar adenocarcinoma of the prostate remains a single primary.**
- **A subsequent small cell carcinoma of the prostate may be abstracted as a separate primary under specific circumstances.**
- **The change is expected to affect very few cases because small cell carcinoma of the prostate is rare.**

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact Linda.Bloschies@vermont.gov.

Why This Matters

- Multiple primary rules ensure consistent identification and reporting of distinct cancers.
- Small cell carcinoma of the prostate is biologically distinct from acinar adenocarcinoma and is associated with more aggressive disease and poorer clinical outcomes.
- Accurate application of the updated rules supports consistent reporting and data quality across registries.

Applying the New Multiple Primary Rules

Rule M3: Acinar adenocarcinoma (8140) of the prostate is **always** a single primary.

Rule M4: Abstract multiple primaries when a patient has a subsequent **small cell carcinoma** of the prostate **more than one year** following a diagnosis of acinar adenocarcinoma and/or a subtype or variant of acinar adenocarcinoma of the prostate.



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This change is expected to affect very few cases, as small cell carcinoma of the prostate is rare (<1% of prostate cancers). The rule was updated because small cell carcinoma of the prostate is an aggressive cancer with poor clinical outcomes and survival. Acinar adenocarcinoma remains a single primary. A subsequent small cell carcinoma diagnosed more than one year later is abstracted as a separate primary.

Coding Scenario

A patient is diagnosed with acinar adenocarcinoma of the prostate in 2025. More than one year later, the patient is diagnosed with small cell carcinoma of the prostate. **Under Rule M4, the small cell carcinoma is abstracted as a separate primary.**

Recommendations for Registrars

- Review the updated Multiple Primary Rules for prostate cancers diagnosed in 2025 and later.
- Verify histology and timing when evaluating potential multiple primaries.
- Remember that acinar adenocarcinoma remains a single primary under Rule M3.
- Consider Rule M4 when a subsequent diagnosis of small cell carcinoma of the prostate occurs more than one year after a diagnosis of acinar adenocarcinoma.

References

[Solid Tumor Rules: Other Sites Multiple Primary Rules Chapter](#)

Questions?

If you have questions regarding this topic, need assistance interpreting coding guidance, or have other cancer registry-related questions, please contact the Vermont Cancer Registry at AHS.VDHHSICancerRegistry@vermont.gov.