



# Western Australian Coding Rule

## 0620/01 Dumped or knocked over by wave

**Q.** What external cause code should be assigned for being dumped by wave or knocked over by wave?

**A.**

Trauma (such as contusion, fracture, dislocation, spinal injury) associated with a wave usually occurs when the physical force of a wave drives a person into the ocean floor.

If a patient is dumped by a wave whilst on a surfboard or other watercraft, assign a code from category V90-V94 *Water transport accidents*.

Currently ICD-10-AM does not have clear external cause classification for injuries due to the physical force of a wave:

- Wave causing person to strike the ocean floor; or
- Person struck by physical force of the wave itself; or
- Wave causing person to strike against an object in water

The best fit Alphabetic Index pathways for the above three external causes are:

**Striking against**

- bottom (when jumping or diving into water) W16.0

...

- object (stationary)

...

- - in water (floating)(submerged) W16.9

- water surface (with injury other than drowning or submersion) W16.2

Code X39 *Exposure to other and unspecified forces of nature* is inappropriate as it is a non-specific code and also includes extraordinary/extreme events such as tidal wave and cataclysm. A HMDS edit is generated when this code is assigned, because it should be rarely assigned.

## DECISION

This query will be referred to IHPA. In the meantime, the following external cause codes for wave injuries are applicable:

- Wave causing person to strike the ocean floor: W16.0
- Person struck by physical force of the wave itself W16.2
- Wave causing person to strike against an object in water W16.9
- Wave causing injury whilst person is on a surfboard or other watercraft: code from V90-V94 *Water transport accidents*.

For non-specific documentation about the mechanism of injury such as “dumped by wave”, where clinician clarification is unavailable, assign W16.2 *Diving or jumping into water striking or hitting water surface*.

[Effective 1 July 2020, ICD-10-AM/ACHI/ACS 11th Ed.]