

Coding Guidelines

Rectosigmoid Junction C199

Primary Site

A tumor is classified as **rectosigmoid** when differentiation between rectum and sigmoid is not possible.

A tumor is classified as **rectal** if

- lower margin lies less than 16 cm from the anal verge **or**
- any part of the tumor is located at least partly within the supply of the superior rectal artery

Anatomic Transition from Sigmoid to Rectum

In the sigmoid colon, approximately 12 to 15 cm from the dentate line, the tenia coli fuse to form the circumferential longitudinal muscle of the rectal wall.

The **rectum** is defined clinically as the distal large intestine commencing opposite the sacral promontory and ending at the anorectal ring, which corresponds to the proximal border of the puborectalis muscle palpable on digital rectal examination. It extends 16 cm from the anal verge.¹

Glossary

Anal verge: The lower (distal) end of the anal canal, junction between the skin of the anal canal and the perianal skin.

Anorectal ring: Top (proximal end) of the anal canal.

Dentate line: An anatomic landmark located between the anal verge and the anorectal ring indicating where the rectum changes to the anal canal. Also called the pectinate line.

Tenia coli: (Plural: teniae coli). Any one of three longitudinal bands of smooth muscle in the colon. They extend from the cecum to the sigmoid colon. Each band is approximately 8 mm wide throughout most of the colon. The widths of the teniae increase in the sigmoid colon and eventually fuse into a covering of longitudinal muscle in the rectum.

¹ Wittekind C, Henson DE, Hutter RVP, Sobin LH, eds. TNM Supplement: A Commentary on Uniform Use. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Wiley-Liss; 2001.