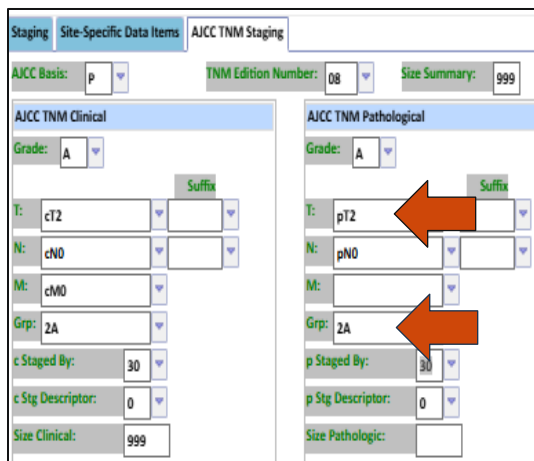# CRStar Insights
AJCC Basis
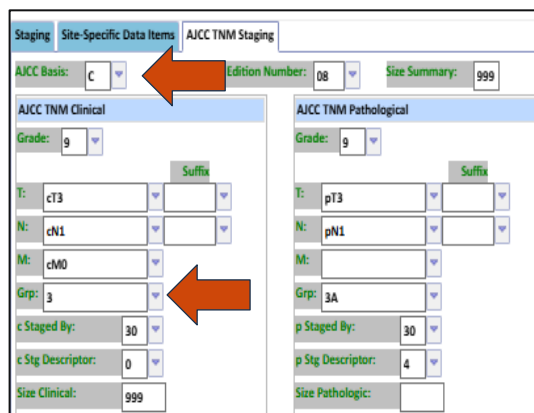
What is this Field and How is it Used?

AJCC Basis is a field utilized in CRStar to indicate the best stage recorded for the case (in most instances, Clinical or Pathological). This field is colored red because it is a required component of the abstract, but it is not transmitted in any exports to standard setters.

Instead, this field is used to determine which stage groups cases are "lumped" into when users run reports. The AJCC basis that is chosen will determine which stage group the case is counted in when the field #568 (Summary AJCC Stage Group) is used in reports.
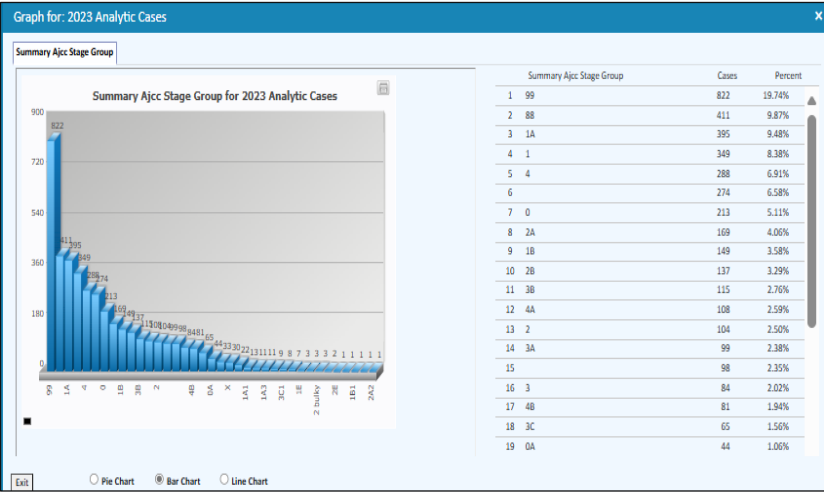

In this example, both clinical and pathologic staging have been recorded, but the pathologic staging is felt to be the most "complete" or "best" stage recorded; therefore, the AJCC basis is coded to a "P." When a user runs a report based on Summary AJCC Stage Group (field #568), this case will be counted in the report as a stage 2A (the pathologic stage).

In this example, a pathologic stage descriptor is used for pathologic staging, indicating that it is recorded post neo- adjuvant treatment. Therefore, for reporting purposes, this case should be counted in the stage 3B grouping. Neo- adjuvant treatment is sometimes given prior to surgery to reduce tumor burden or perhaps the term "down-staging" is used. In this case, the stage 3B (clinical) is the more accurate stage for grouping into studies or reports.

Here is an example of reporting using field #568, "Summary AJCC Stage Group." This is a population of one year of analytic breast cancer cases. Below is the table seen when graphing the Summary AJCC Stage Group (Field #568), for a population of cases.

It is a good idea to QC this field on occasion, to ensure that the proper stage grouping for cases is accounted for in reports and studies. Below is a list pop of cases with an AJCC Summary Stage Group = Blank. These cases clearly have clinical stage recorded, but the AJCC basis is set to "P" which causes the "AJCC Summary Stage Group" field (#568) to be blank in the report.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
1	Summary Ajcc Stage Group	Ajcc Stage Basis	AJCC TNM Path T	AJCC TNM Path N	AJCC TNM Path M	AJCC TNM Path Stage Group	AJCC TNM Clin T	AJCC TNM Clin N	AJCC T
2									
3		P					cTX	cN0	cM0
4		P					cTX	cN0	cM0
5		P					cTX	cNX	cM0
6		P							
7		P					cTX	cNX	cM0
8		P					cT1c	cN0	cM0
9		P					cTX	cNX	cM0

How to Choose Which Value to Code the AJCC Basis Field?

Pages 4, 5, and 11 of the 8th Edition AJCC Staging Manual provide guidance for determining in which stage a case should be counted for surveillance analysis and comparison purposes. The stage that should be used for surveillance analysis and comparison purposes is what should be indicated in the AJCC Basis field. This should be determined on a case-by-case basis, as there are many unique situations that will determine how a case should be counted for comparisons.

C – Clinical Staging - The most complete and best staging information I have for this case and the clinical stage group is how this patient should be counted in studies that use AJCC Summary Stage Group.

P – Pathologic Staging - The most complete and best staging information I have for this case and no neoadjuvant treatment was given. Pathologic stage is how this patient should be counted in studies that use AJCC Summary Stage Group.

R – Retreatment Classification - This code should be very seldom used, as it indicates that no complete staging is available as outlined in the rules for AJCC clinical or pathologic staging. Retreatment classification staging will NOT be included in reports of AJCC Summary Stage Group, and this case would be excluded.

A – Autopsy Classification - This code is also seldom used and indicates that no complete staging is available as outlined in the rules for AJCC clinical or pathologic staging. Autopsy classification staging will NOT be included in reports of AJCC Summary Stage Group, and this case would be excluded.

Y – Classification performed during or after initial multi-modality therapy - This code is seldom used and indicates that no complete staging is available as outlined in the rules for AJCC clinical or pathologic staging. Y classified cases will not be included in reports of AJCC Summary Stage Group and this case would be excluded.

As outlined above, only cases with an AJCC Basis of C or P will be included in reports when using the field "Summary AJCC Stage Group," field #568. Users should be cautious when using an R, A, or Y for AJCC basis as this case will be excluded in any reports based on Summary AJCC Stage Group. In scenarios where a patient received neoadjuvant treatment and a clinical stage is available, AJCC Basis should be coded to a "C."

Keep in mind that this is an internal CRStar field that only comes into play when "Summary AJCC Stage Group" is used in reporting or "AJCC Stage" is selected for the stage output in canned reports.

This field does not affect how the data is exported to the state or NCDB and the field itself is not exported.

If the AJCC Basis field is left blank, the stage will be reflected as "unknown" in reports.

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