

Case Number:	CM13-0021414		
Date Assigned:	10/11/2013	Date of Injury:	09/17/2011
Decision Date:	01/28/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/23/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/09/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to a physician reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The physician reviewer is Board Certified in Hand Surgery and Plastic Surgery and is licensed to practice in Oregon. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The physician reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

This patient underwent a biceps tendon repair and developed a posterior interosseous nerve palsy. He has limited wrist and digit extension. His surgeon recommends nerve exploration and physical therapy.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

Exploration of the interosseous nerve at the left proximal forearm: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 270.

Decision rationale: The MTUS does not specifically address the indications for interosseous nerve exploration. According to ACOEM, referral for hand surgery consultation may be indicated for patients who have red flags of a serious nature; fail to respond to conservative management, including worksite modifications; or have clear clinical and special study evidence of a lesion that has been shown to benefit, in both the short and long term, from surgical intervention. In this case, the patient has a clear indication for surgery. Surgical repair of distal biceps tendon rupture is a technically challenging procedure that has the potential for devastating

and disabling neurological complications. The anatomy of the proximal forearm is complex, containing the radial nerve and its bifurcation into the posterior interosseous nerve and its superficial sensory branch. Exposure of the radial tuberosity places all of these nerves in danger. This patient probably has a posterior interosseous nerve injury and needs his nerve explored and repaired if wrist and finger flexion is to be restored.

Physical Therapy, 2 x per week x 4 weeks, for the left elbow: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 474.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 21.

Decision rationale: Repair of the posterior interosseous nerve is medically necessary. The MTUS guidelines support therapy following nerve repair. Per the guidelines, Nerve Repair: Elbow - Wrist [DWC]: Postsurgical treatment: 20 visits over 6 weeks Postsurgical physical medicine treatment period: 8 months

Zofran 8mg, #20, post-op: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Antiemetics (for opioid nausea), and on the Physician's Desk Reference, Zofran.

Decision rationale: The records do not document problems with nausea. There is no information in the records that documents a need for an anti-emetic following surgery.