

Case Number:	CM13-0031479		
Date Assigned:	12/04/2013	Date of Injury:	06/21/2013
Decision Date:	04/17/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/18/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/03/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation and is licensed to practice in Illinois. 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 expert 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:

California MTUS Guidelines state acupuncture is used as an option when pain medication is reduced or not tolerated, and may be used as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation and/or surgical intervention. The time to produce functional improvement includes 3 treatments to 6 treatments. The patient does report limited range of motion, spasm, tightness, and tenderness. However, the current request for 8 sessions of acupuncture treatment exceeds guideline recommendations. Therefore, the request is non-certified

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

ACUPUNCTURE THERAPY FOR THE LUMBAR SPINE TWO TIMES A WEEK FOR FOUR WEEKS/ EIGHT VISITS: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: California MTUS Guidelines state acupuncture is used as an option when pain medication is reduced or not tolerated, and may be used as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation and/or surgical intervention. The time to produce functional improvement includes 3 treatments to 6 treatments. The patient does report limited range of motion, spasm, tightness,

and tenderness. However, the current request for 8 sessions of acupuncture treatment exceeds guideline recommendations. Therefore, the request is non-certified