

Case Number:	CM13-0042367		
Date Assigned:	12/27/2013	Date of Injury:	04/25/2011
Decision Date:	04/26/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/09/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/30/2013

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 has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine and is licensed to practice in California. 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:

The patient reported a date of injury of 04/25/2011. According to the progress report dated 09/30/2013, the patient complains of pain in his ankle. He rates his pain 6/10. He states that walking upstairs and downstairs aggravate his symptoms, and icing, exercise, and stretching help alleviate his symptoms. The physical examination shows there is tenderness of the Achilles tendon insertion. The left Achilles bursa is not swollen, yet slightly tender. There is also tenderness to the retrocalcaneal bursa, but there is no warmth or redness. Strength testing is within normal limits. The physician is requesting platelet-rich plasma injection to the left Achilles.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

PRP INJECTION TO L ACHILLES: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Ankle & Foot (Platelet-rich plasma [PRP])

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Ankle & Foot.

Decision rationale: This patient presents with ankle pain. The physician is requesting platelet-rich plasma injection to the left Achilles. The utilization review dated 10/09/2013 denied the request stating that "guidelines note PRP injections are not recommended. There is no compelling evidence to contradict the guidelines at this time. No exceptional findings were noted that would support the need to deviate from guideline recommendations." The MTUS and ACOEM Guidelines are silent with regards to the request. However, ODG Guidelines on the ankle and foot states that for platelet-rich plasma (PRP), it is not recommended with recent higher quality evidence showing this treatment to be no better than placebo. In addition, the first high-quality study (an RCT and JAMA) concluded that injections of platelet-rich plasma (PRP) for chronic Achilles tendon disorder or tendinopathy (also known as tendinitis) do not appear to reduce pain or increase activity more than placebo. In this case, ODG Guidelines do not support the use of PRP injection to treat Achilles tendon disorder or tendinopathy. Therefore, recommendation is for denial.