

Case Number:	CM13-0051551		
Date Assigned:	12/27/2013	Date of Injury:	03/13/2013
Decision Date:	04/04/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/23/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/14/2013

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 Orthopedic Surgery and is licensed to practice in Pennsylvania. 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 is a 54 year old gentleman who was injured in a work-related accident on 3/13/13. The clinical records for review included a 10/9/13 progress report for follow up of left ankle complaints and noted that a recent corticosteroid injection provided only three days of temporary relief. The patient continued to have sharp, throbbing pain in the ankle with physical examination findings of 5/5 motor strength of the right ankle, 4/5 on the left with plantar and dorsiflexion, and increased sensation over the plantar medial nerve. There was tenderness noted over the anterior talofibular ligament. There was restricted range of motion at end points. The patient's diagnosis was left ankle joint pain. Based on failed conservative care including recent injection therapy to the sural nerve, surgery for nerve excision was recommended. Previous ankle MRI report dated 8/7/13 showed a rupture with chronic sprain of the anterior talofibular ligament with no other significant findings noted.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Left Ankle Excision Sural Nerve Implantation into the Fibula: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 14 Ankle and Foot Complaints Page(s): 374.

Decision rationale: California ACOEM Guidelines would not support the request for left ankle excision, implantation of sural nerve into the fibula. With regard to the sural nerve, there should be clear clinical evidence on imaging of a lesion that is shown to benefit in both the short and long term from a surgical process. The claimant's clinical imaging in this case indicates a chronic strain to the ankle but gives no indication or reason for the request for sural nerve excision. The specific request for the operative process in question would not be supported as medically necessary.