

Case Number:	CM13-0056993		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	06/01/2011
Decision Date:	05/06/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/30/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/25/2013

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 Occupational Medicine 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 is a 56 year old female who was injured on 06/01/2011. She was carrying a pan that slipped out of her hand when she grabbed it forcefully to prevent it from falling. She experienced immediate pain in her right wrist and elbow. Prior treatment history has included multiple injections, conservative treatment with physical therapy. The patient underwent a right carpal tunnel release in 10/2012 and she was provided postoperative physical therapy. She also underwent a re-exploration, cubital tunnel, with release of ulnar nerve, medial epicondyle osteotomy, and excision of lipoma on 12/05/2013; carpal tunnel release under five power magnification on 10/26/2012. Diagnostic studies reviewed include MRI of the right elbow without contrast performed on 03/04/2013 revealed postoperative change located over the proximal insertion of the common flexor tendon; and chronic changes of tendinosis involving the proximal insertion of the common extensor tendon. Pain Management Consultation dated 07/18/2013 indicated the patient is diagnosed with 1) status post repair of right common flexor tendon with postoperative scarring and thickening and pain; 2) Status post right carpal tunnel release - improved. The patient is a candidate for platelet rich plasma injection under ultrasound guidance to the common flexor tendon area to help with healing and pain. A Supplemental Report dated 10/02/2013 states the patient continues to complain of swelling and a mass about the elbow which appears to be a soft tissue mass. She has exquisite pain about the elbow. Objective findings on exam revealed a 3 cm x 3 cm mass which appears to be cystic in nature. The patient has soft tissue swelling about this area with unremitting pain over the elbow, status post ulnar nerve release. The patient is diagnosed with mass, right medial epicondyle, right elbow. A request was made for an authorization for exploration of the medial aspect of the elbow. The patient has failed conservative therapy and continues to have exquisite pain about the elbow.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

PURCHASE OF COLD THERAPY UNIT: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation (ODG) OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES- ELBOW (ACUTE & CHRONIC)

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES(ODG), CONTINUOUS-FLOW CRYOTHERAPY

Decision rationale: This is a request for purchase of a cold therapy unit for post-operative care. While continuous-flow cryotherapy may be recommended post-operatively generally for up to seven days of use, purchase is not necessary. Rental is preferred. Purchase of cold therapy unit is therefore non-certified