

Case Number:	CM13-0058451		
Date Assigned:	04/11/2014	Date of Injury:	11/19/2004
Decision Date:	06/12/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/08/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/27/2013

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 and 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 is a 59-year-old with an injury date on 11/19/04. Based on the 10/28/13 progress report provided by [REDACTED], the diagnoses are: 1. Tinea pedis; 2. Plantar fasciitis; and 3. Plantar calcaneal bursitis. On 10/28/13, the patient "continues to have severe pain with palpation of the right heel plantar center aspect and also medial tubercle. Pain with palpation of arch muscles on medial aspect +2/4 swelling in heel. Pain with palpation of second, third and fourth metatarsals consistent with stress fracture. Dermatological: patient demonstrates decreased peeling skin on bilateral feet. Musculoskeletal: patient demonstrates hammertoe deformities of soft tissue nature, second through fifth toes bilaterally. Neurological: patient demonstrates decreased vibratory sensation in bilateral feet, sharp dull and light touch within normal limits. The Hallux nails are thickened and yellowed." [REDACTED] is requesting an ultrasound for the bilateral plantar fascial ligaments/plantar center aspect of the heels. The utilization review determination being challenged is dated 11/6/13. [REDACTED] is the requesting provider, and he provided the treatment reports from 1/15/14 to 11/11/14.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

ULTRASOUND FOR THE BILATERAL PLANTAR FASCIAL LIGAMENTS/PLANTAR CENTER ASPECT OF THE HEELS.: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES (ODG); J. SHOULDER ELBOW SURG, 2011 OCT; AJR AM J ROENTGENOL. 2001 MAR; 176(3):777-82; DEPARTMENT OF RADIOLOGY, VICTORIA HOUSE PRIVATE HOSPITAL; RADIOLOGY. 2005 OCT; 237(1):230-4. EPUB 2005 AUG 18; DEPARTMENT OF RADIOLOGY, THOMAS JEFFERSON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL; J CLIN ULTRASOUND. 2002 MAY; 30(4):193-202; AND DEPARTMENT OF RADIOLOGY, NORTH SHORE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL.

Decision rationale: According to the 10/28/14 report by the treating physician, this patient presents with "continued swelling in heels, increased pain with standing and walking. Patient continues with anti fungal cream 2x a day, states foot is doing better. Patient continues with thin gel pad in shoe which continues to help. Patient continues with meds that control diabetes and aspirin." On 1/15/14, the patient states that he walks twenty (20) minutes and gets pain and swelling in right leg, particularly in plantar center aspect of heel. The patient had an "ultrasound type test on leg to determine if he had a clot in his veins" according to the 03/12/14 report. The date of the ultrasound was between 02/19/13 and 03/12/14. The subsequent reports do not mention ultrasound, and included reports do not show the results of the exam. On 9/16/13, the patient has increased daily exercise in form of walking, but noticed increased stiffness in front and back of leg. On 10/14/13, the patient notes new pain on top of right foot, and peeling skin on right foot. Per report on 10/4/13, the treating physician requests "diagnostic ultrasound of bilateral plantar fascial ligaments and also plantar center aspect of heels, to determine if patient has planter fasciitis and/or plantar calcaneal bursitis." The Official Disability Guidelines recommend an ultrasound of the ankle in cases of chronic foot pain localized at the plantar aspect of the heel, in which case plantar fasciitis is clinically suspected. Based on patient's persistent symptoms in plantar aspect of heel, the requested ultrasound is reasonable and within the guidelines for this type of condition. Recommendation is for authorization.