

Case Number:	CM13-0061432		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	12/10/2010
Decision Date:	11/06/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/21/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/04/2013

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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management and is licensed to practice in Tennessee. 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 42-year-old male who has submitted a claim for left knee surgery, failed right knee surgery, lumbar spine disc bulge, and left lateral epicondylitis associated with an industrial injury date of 12/10/2010. Medical records from 2011 to 2013 were reviewed. The patient complained of worsening left knee pain within the last 3 to 4 months. The patient used a single-point cane for ambulation. Range of motion of the left knee towards flexion was measured at 90 degrees. There was no comprehensive physical exam available for review. Treatment to date has included left knee surgery on 3/27/2012, left knee Synvisc injection on 2/26/2013, and medications. Utilization review from 11/21/2013 denied the request for Synvisc (or equivalent) injection for the left knee because there was no imaging to confirm osteoarthritis.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Synvisc (Or Equivalent) Injection for the Left Knee: 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), Knee Chapter, Efficacy of Intra-Articular Hyaluronic Acid Injections in Knee Osteoarthritis

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee and Leg, Hyaluronic Acid Injections

Decision rationale: The California MTUS does not specifically address viscosupplementation. Per the Strength of Evidence hierarchy established by the California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) was used instead. Official Disability Guidelines states that criteria for hyaluronic acid injections include patients with significantly symptomatic osteoarthritis that has not responded adequately to standard non-pharmacologic and pharmacologic treatments or is intolerant of these therapies after at least 3 months; failure to adequately respond to aspiration and injection of intra-articular steroid. In this case, patient complained of worsening left knee pain within the last 3 to 4 months. Range of motion of the left knee towards flexion was measured at 90 degrees. Symptoms persisted despite left knee surgery on 3/27/2012, left knee Synvisc injection on 2/26/2013, and medications. However, there was no comprehensive physical exam of the left knee available for review. No imaging was likewise presented to support presence of osteoarthritis. Outcome of previous Synvisc injection was also not documented. The medical necessity cannot be established due to insufficient information. Therefore, the request for Synvisc (or equivalent) injection for the left knee is not medically necessary.