

Case Number:	CM13-0061564		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	08/31/2011
Decision Date:	03/26/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/01/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/05/2013

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 New York and New Hampshire. 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:

The patient is a 44-year-old female with the date of injury of August 31, 2011. She injured her cervical spine. She has chronic neck pain. Cervical MRI from 9 22,013 shows C4-5 and C6-7-- 2 to 3 mm disc bulges with mild central stenosis and with moderate to severe foraminal stenosis. Physical examination showed normal sensation and give way weakness. Treatment to date has included epidural steroid injections and medications. ACDF surgery at C4-5 and C6-7 has already been approved. At issue is whether preoperative medical clearance is medically necessary.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Preoperative Medical Clearance: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Am Fam Physician, 2013 Mar 15;87(6):414-8, Preoperative testing before noncardiac surgery: guidelines and recommendations, Feely MA1, Collins CS, Daniels PR, Kebede EB, Jatoi A, Mauck KF

Decision rationale: Patient's two-level anterior cervical discectomy and fusion surgery has been approved. At issue is whether preoperative medical clearance is needed. The patient is 44 years old. She has no major medical conditions to warrant a preoperative clearance. Her past medical history did not contain any significant medical problems to warrant preoperative evaluation. The patient is a relatively healthy 44-year-old female. Her past surgical histories include hysterectomy, tummy tuck, a topic pregnancy, and a small surgery to remove fatty tissue from her arm. The medical records document that she has high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes. However, the medical records do not document any significant issues with the patient's past medical history her current state of health. There is no documentation that the patient is in a poor state of health or has significant medical issues requiring medical attention prior to surgery. Reference, as listed above, suggest that preoperative medical clearance is not medically necessary for 44-year-old patients in her usual state of health undergoing noncardiac surgery. According to the published medical literature referenced above, and the medical records, there is no medical necessity for preoperative clearance evaluation for this patient undergoing routine anterior cervical spine surgery.