

Case Number:	CM13-0063474		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	04/17/1997
Decision Date:	06/04/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/12/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/10/2013

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 Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine and is licensed to practice in Arizona. 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:

This is a 59 year old male with a history of work related injury on 4/17/97 that was insidious and chronic in presentation, due to the work he performed as a police officer. After years of conservative management, he subsequently underwent a L4-S1 lumbar fusion on 10/31/13 as a result of both lumbar instability and neurological deficits that included weakness in the left extensor hallucis longus, foot dorsi and plantar flexors with a motor strength deficit of 2/5. According to the operative report the blood loss during the procedure was 200ml. In dispute is the use of a Cell saver machine for recycling the patient's own lost red blood cells during the course of his surgical procedure.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

CELLSAVER MACHINE RENTAL FOR DATE OF SERVICE 10/30/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Blood saving techniques and medications. In; Blood transfusion guideline, Utrecht (The Netherlands): Dutch Institute for Healthcare Improvement CBO; 2011. Pages 321-83. [280 references].

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Blood Salvage Produces Higher Total Blood Product

Costs in Single-Level Lumbar Spine Surgery, Spine, Volume 38(8), 15 April 2013, pages 703-708.

Decision rationale: Cell Saver (Intraoperative Cell Salvage Machine) is commonly known as a "cell saver", the intraoperative cell salvage machine suctions, washes, and filters blood so it can be given back to the patient's body instead of being thrown away. One advantage to this is the patient receives his/her own blood instead of donor blood, so there is no risk of contracting outside diseases. Because the blood is recirculated, there is no limit to the amount of blood that can be given back to the patient. The cell saver is also a viable alternative for patients with religious objections to receiving blood transfusions. A review of OVID found 74 articles referencing the use of intraoperative cell salvaging. Of those only one was found pertinent to the question at hand. The authors looked at a cost analysis for single level spinal fusion and use of device for red blood cell salvage. They concluded the use of the device was not cost-effective and does not significantly reduce the need for allogeneic blood transfusion (Blood Salvage Produces Higher Total Blood Product Costs in Single-Level Lumbar Spine Surgery, Spine, Volume 38(8), 15 April 2013, pages 703-708). The ACOEM, Post-surgical Treatment and ODG guidelines do not discuss the use of this modality during operative procures. According to the patient's operative report, dictated on 10/31/2013, there is no mention of the Cell Saver's use during the surgical procedure and it is not listed a durable or expendable item utilized. As a result of that omission, the request for Cellsaver Machine Rental is not medically necessary.