

Case Number:	CM13-0070403		
Date Assigned:	01/03/2014	Date of Injury:	06/06/2009
Decision Date:	05/28/2014	UR Denial Date:	12/06/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/24/2013

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 Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Diseases 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 injured worker reported an injury on 06/06/2009. The mechanism of injury occurred when she was unloading a pallet but, was unsure of the weight, when she experience severe low back pain. The injured worker has had anterior L5-S1 disc surgery and estimated her low back pain improved by 25%. The clinical documentation from 10/07/2013 reported constant deep burning low back pain, rate 6/10 as well as intermittent radiating low back pain into both lower extremities, down to the calf and ankle, rated as 5/10 on the right side and 6/10 on the left side. The range of motion testing over cervical spine showed restriction to 80% of normal flexion and 70% of normal on extension and right and left lateral rotations. In the progress note from 10/07/2013 the deep tendon reflexes were diminished to 1+ bilaterally.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

THE REQUEST FOR CBC, ESR, AND C-REACTIVE PROTEIN: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 70.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDS, specific drug list and adverse effects Page(s): 70. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Medline Plus ESR, C-Reactive Protein.

Decision rationale: The injured worker has a history of two lumbar surgeries; however, claims the surgery performed in August 2012 was an anterior L5-S1 disc surgery for her injury. According to the progress note the injured worker was complaining of deep burning low back pain rating 6/10 as well as intermittent radiating low back pain into both lower extremities. She was diagnosed with mild to chronic lumbago bilateral sciatic radiculopathy. According to California Chronic Pain Medical Treatment guidelines NSAIDs recommend periodic lab monitoring of a CBC and chemistry profile (including liver and renal function tests). According to Medline Plus an ESR is often ordered for someone who is having unexplained fevers, certain types of arthritis, muscle symptom, or other vague symptoms that cannot be explained. This test can be used to monitor inflammatory diseases or cancer. It is a screening test, which means it cannot be used to diagnose a specific disorder. However it is useful for detecting and monitoring autoimmune disorders, certain forms of arthritis, inflammatory diseases that cause vague symptoms, tissue death and tuberculosis. Medline Plus also states the CRP test is a general test to check for inflammation in the body, but cannot pinpoint the exact location. The CRP may also be ordered to check for flare-ups of inflammatory diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, or vasculitis, or determine if anti-inflammatory medicine is working to treat a disease or condition. However, there was no documentation submitted to give a rationale for such tests or to be ordered. Therefore, the request for CBC, ESR and C-Reactive Protein is not medically necessary and acceptable.