

Case Number:	CM13-0072088		
Date Assigned:	01/08/2014	Date of Injury:	02/26/2012
Decision Date:	04/22/2014	UR Denial Date:	12/11/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/30/2013

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 & Rehabilitation, 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 51-year-old female who was injured on 02/26/2013 while a male student came into the classroom riding his skateboard, suddenly looked up and the student "was charging" at her with his fists clenched. The patient instinctively lifted her right hand and he ran into her hand and she fell back with her bottom on her desk. She then turned her body in the opposite direction and she lifted her arm. He then struck her again with his body. The patient was evaluated at the employer's industrial clinic on or about 03/01/2013. She underwent x-rays of her left upper extremity. Her left arm was placed in a sling. Prior treatment history included medications and physical therapy. Progress report (Pr-2) dated 12/03/2013 documented the patient to have complaints of pain and stiffness of the left shoulder as well as tingling in the left ring and middle finger. Objective findings on exam are illegible. The diagnoses are: 1) acromioclavicular (joint) (ligament) sprain (840.0); 2) Other specified disorders of bursae and tendons in shoulder region (726.19); 3) Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (354.0). The assessment reveal: physical therapy twice a week for 6 weeks and MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) left shoulder.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MAGNETIC RESONANCE IMAGING (MRI) LEFT SHOULDER WITHOUT CONTRAST: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 9 Shoulder Complaints Page(s): 207-208, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 6.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 9 Shoulder Complaints Page(s): 207.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS/ACOEM guidelines, "For most patients with shoulder problems, special studies are not needed unless a four- to six-week period of conservative care and observation fails to improve symptoms. Most patients improve quickly, provided red-flag conditions are ruled out." The guidelines state that in general, specialized imaging studies of the shoulder are not recommended during the first month to six weeks of activity limitation due to shoulder symptoms. A hand written medical report dated 12/3/13 documents the patient presented with a new complaint of pain and stiffness in the left shoulder. Tenderness and decreased range of motion (ROM) is noted on examination. The medical records do not reveal any findings that would suggest a red flag condition is present. There is no documentation of response to conservative treatment such as medication and physical therapy. There is no acute trauma reported or documented treatment history of this complaint. A course of observation and conservative care should take place with response monitored prior to considering any special studies. The medical necessity of an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) of the left shoulder has not been established.