

Case Number:	CM14-0004357		
Date Assigned:	02/05/2014	Date of Injury:	09/24/2012
Decision Date:	07/21/2014	UR Denial Date:	01/06/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/13/2014

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 Medicine 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:

This is a 48-year-old male with a 9/24/2012 date of injury. He was working on the second floor on a scaffold, when someone from the fourth floor accidentally dropped a screw gun that weighted about 3 pounds and hit him on the back of his head. 5/1/2013 AME report describes constant pain in the neck and back of the head. The pain is severe, throbbing and burning. The patient has tingling in the both arms. Medication and resting his head make the pain feel better. The pain interferes with his ADL at the level of 8/10. The patient limits his activity due to pain. Physical examination of the neck and upper extremities revealed decreased ROM in the cervical spine in extension, rotation to the right, lateral bending to the right; the impingement and relocation test in the shoulder were normal. 4/18/2013 Progress report states that the patient complains of persistent headaches and neck and bilateral upper extremities pain. EMG and NCS studies of the bilateral upper extremities showed no evidence of cervical radiculopathy or any median or ulnar neuropathies in the upper extremities. 4/11/2013 Progress report states, that the patient continues complaining of the pain. The pain is noted in the head and upper and lower neck and radiates down to the upper shoulders and arms. Physical examination revealed tenderness along the cervical paraspinal muscles, upper trapezius, levator scapular and periscapular regions. Spurling's maneuver was negative and neurologic exam was intact and shoulder ROM was intact. MRI of the cervical spine showed borderline narrowed bony spinal canal and disc osteophyte complex, C3-6 and foraminal stenosis at C5-6. CT scan of the head dated 09/24/2012 was normal.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

CERVICAL EPIDURAL UNDER FLUOROSCOPY: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Epidural Steroid Injections Page(s): 46.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 46. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation The AMA Guides.

Decision rationale: The prior denial was reviewed stating that there was no object of radiculopathy on exam or imaging. The notes were reviewed stating that there was neck pain radiating down the shoulders and arms. Motor, reflex, and sensory examinations were normal. Spurling's maneuver was negative. The MTUS guidelines state that radiculopathy must be documented by physical examination and corroborated by imaging studies and/or electrodiagnostic testing. Electrodiagnostic studies showed no evidence of cervical radiculopathy. In this case, there is insufficient documentation of radiculopathy. Medical necessity for the requested item has not been established. The requested item is not medically necessary.