

Case Number:	CM14-0007341		
Date Assigned:	02/10/2014	Date of Injury:	10/31/2008
Decision Date:	06/23/2014	UR Denial Date:	01/08/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/17/2014

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 Orthopedic Surgery 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 is a 42 year old female with a date of injury of October 31, 2008. The mechanism of injury is not disclosed. A progress note dated March 10, 2014 is provided for review in support of the above noted request indicating a diagnosis of the cervical spine sprain/strain with left upper extremity radiculopathy, multilevel disc bulge and desiccation, with a 3 mm disc bulge and mild central stenosis. A C3-4, C5-6, C6-7, disc protrusion with mild central stenosis is noted by MRI scan dated August 2, 2013. Additionally, a diagnosis of lumbar spine sprain/strain with left lower extremity radiculopathy is also reported with an L4-5 disc bulge with a 1 mm mild scoliosis curve according to an MRI scan from August 2, 2013. Additionally, a left knee patellofemoral arthralgia, in particular derangement is noted. The claimant was seen in October 2013, with persistent neck pain and stiffness and associated muscle spasms with a pain level rated 8/10, and radiating symptoms to the left upper extremity. Cervical spine examination reveals limited range of motion with pain. Mild spasms were noted over the paraspinal's. McMurray's test was positive on the left and a compression test was positive. Tenderness and spasm are noted in the cervical spine in arms, and sensation was decreased along the C6-7, right upper extremity. In December. The claimant presented for follow-up and was utilizing Norco infacts that at the time. Physical exam findings for the cervical spine were similar to those previously noted. On December 20, 2013. The claimant was seen by another physician, with complaints of neck pain, rated 8/10 on the VAS, with pain radiating across the shoulders and down her fingers with paresthesias. Tenderness was noted over C4 through C7, range of motion was limited in all planes, and a cervical traction unit was recommended for home use. In this supplemental medical report. A notation is made that delaying the potentially beneficial medical attention will only serve to lead to reappearance of the tame symptomatology. The home traction unit continues to be recommended.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

CERVICAL HOME TRACTION UNIT FOR HOME USE: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 173-174.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints.

Decision rationale: ACOEM California guidelines do not recommend the use of traction as there is no high-grade scientific evidence to support the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of this modality. ACOEM and ODG guidelines are also utilized with no recommendation for this device. In the absence of guideline support for the use of this modality, this request is not medically necessary and appropriate.