

Case Number:	CM14-0009458		
Date Assigned:	02/14/2014	Date of Injury:	12/10/1992
Decision Date:	07/16/2014	UR Denial Date:	01/16/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/24/2014

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 Hand Surgery, and is licensed to practice in Oregon. 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 65-year-old who has bilateral thumb basal joint arthritis. X-rays from 2011 reveal thumb carpometacarpal joint arthritis. Exam on 12/3/13 shows pain with grinding of the right thumb basal joint.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

RIGHT BASAL JOINT ARTHROPLASTY: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Forearm, Wrist and Hand, CMC arthroplasty.

Decision rationale: The patient has advanced carpometacarpal arthritis on 2011 x-rays. She remains symptomatic. Although the records do not document more recent x-rays, there is no possibility that the radiographs will show improvement; the natural history of carpometacarpal arthritis is to worsen over time. According to the Official Disability Guidelines, total joint arthroplasty of the thumb carpometacarpal joint has proven to be efficacious with improved motion, strength, and pain relief for the treatment of stage III and early stage IV osteoarthritis of

the carpometacarpal joint in older patients with low activity demands. Arthroplasty should significantly improve this patient's pain. As such, the request is medically necessary.