

Case Number:	CM14-0105361		
Date Assigned:	07/30/2014	Date of Injury:	06/15/2013
Decision Date:	11/17/2014	UR Denial Date:	06/30/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/08/2014

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 Preventative Medicine has a subspecialty in Occupational Medicine and is licensed to practice in Iowa. 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 patient is a 39 year old male employee with date of injury of 6/15/2013. A review of the medical records indicates that the patient is undergoing treatment for left knee meniscus tear (status post arthroscopy in Jan 2014), lumbar sprain, and right leg and knee sprain. Subjective complaints include persistent knee pain; diffuse anterior pain in left knee; occasional swelling; occasional locking and buckling. Symptoms are worse with bending, twisting, lifting and transition motions. Objective findings include MRI revealing medial meniscus tear in the left knee. Exam of left knee revealed medial joint line tenderness; positive McMurray's; trace effusion; no tenderness or laxity over collateral ligaments; negative anterior and posterior drawer and Lachman's. Gait is mildly antalgic with WB on left lower extremity. Treatment has included physical therapy, but procedures and efficacy are not documented. Medications have included Naprosyn and Norco as of April 2014. The utilization review dated 6/30/2014 denied the request for a left knee MRI without contrast.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI without contrast left knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 341-343.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints
Page(s): 341-343. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG)
Knee and Leg, MRI's (magnetic resonance imaging)

Decision rationale: ACOEM notes "Special studies are not needed to evaluate most knee complaints until after a period of conservative care and observation" and "Reliance only on imaging studies to evaluate the source of knee symptoms may carry a significant risk of diagnostic confusion (false-positive test results) because of the possibility of identifying a problem that was present before symptoms began, and therefore has no temporal association with the current symptoms." The treating physician does not detail the failure of conservative treatment. ODG further details indications for MRI:-Acute trauma to the knee, including significant trauma (e.g, motor vehicle accident), or if suspect posterior knee dislocation or ligament or cartilage disruption.-Nontraumatic knee pain, child or adolescent: nonpatellofemoral symptoms. Initial anteroposterior and lateral radiographs nondiagnostic (demonstrate normal findings or a joint effusion) next study if clinically indicated. If additional study is needed.- Nontraumatic knee pain, child or adult. Patellofemoral (anterior) symptoms. Initial anteroposterior, lateral, and axial radiographs nondiagnostic (demonstrate normal findings or a joint effusion). If additional imaging is necessary, and if internal derangement is suspected.- Nontraumatic knee pain, adult. Nontrauma, nontumor, nonlocalized pain. Initial anteroposterior and lateral radiographs nondiagnostic (demonstrate normal findings or a joint effusion). If additional studies are indicated, and if internal derangement is suspected.-Nontraumatic knee pain, adult - nontrauma, nontumor, nonlocalized pain. Initial anteroposterior and lateral radiographs demonstrate evidence of internal derangement (e.g., Peligrini Stieda disease, joint compartment widening).-Repeat MRIs: Post-surgical if need to assess knee cartilage repair tissue. (Ramappa, 2007). Routine use of MRI for follow-up of asymptomatic patients following knee arthroplasty is not recommended. (Weissman, 2011)While the treating physician does document increased left knee pain, decreased extension and flexion, there is a lack objective findings to support red flag diagnosis, and documentation detailing a trial and failure of physical therapy. In addition, there is no evidence of a new injury or re-injury. As such, the request for MRI Left Knee is not medically necessary.