

Case Number:	CM14-0106176		
Date Assigned:	07/30/2014	Date of Injury:	04/08/2014
Decision Date:	08/29/2014	UR Denial Date:	06/27/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/09/2014

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 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 injured worker sustained an industrial injury on April 8, 2014. The mechanism of injury was crush injury involving the right foot and ankle. The patient is not weight-bearing and utilizes a cam Walker. Examination reveals swelling, ecchymosis, tenderness to palpation of the medial malleolus, and limited dorsiflexion. The disputed request is for 8 sessions of acupuncture therapy to the right ankle. A utilization review determination on June 27, 2014 had non-certified this request, citing that the patient's response to treatment so far was not noted.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Acupuncture 2 Visits per Week for 4 Weeks to Right Ankle: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: Acupuncture is used as an option when pain medication is reduced or not tolerated, it may be used as an adjunct to physical rehabilitation and/or surgical intervention to hasten functional recovery. Frequency and duration of acupuncture or acupuncture with electrical stimulation may be performed as follows: (1) Time to produce functional improvement: 3 to 6 treatments.(2) Frequency: 1 to 3 times per week. (3) Optimum duration: 1

to 2 months. (d) Acupuncture treatments may be extended if functional improvement is documented. These decisions are left up to the acupuncturist. The requesting healthcare provider on June 6, 2014 had requested 8 sessions of acupuncture for the right ankle. As requested in this case, the course of acupuncture for 8 sessions is not appropriate. The guidelines specifically state that the time to produce functional improvement is after 6 visits of acupuncture. The request is not medically necessary.