

Case Number:	CM14-0120071		
Date Assigned:	09/24/2014	Date of Injury:	02/11/2014
Decision Date:	10/24/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/29/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/30/2014

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 Family 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:

34 yr. old male claimant sustained a work injury on 2/11/14 involving the neck. He was diagnosed with cervical disc displacement, spinal stenosis and cervicgia. A progress note on 6/24/14 indicated the claimant had pain in the left hand, left fingers, left upper extremity and right hand/fingers. He had a trial of CESI (cervical epidural steroid injection) and had 60 % improvement in the pas. He has been averaging 5/10 pain. Exam findings were notable for stiffness and reduced range of motion of the cervical spine. The treating physician recommended another epidural steroid injection.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 Cervical Epidural Steroid Injection, Outpatient: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACEOM - [https://www.acoempracguides.org/Cervical and Thoracic Spine](https://www.acoempracguides.org/Cervical%20and%20Thoracic%20Spine); Table 2 Summary of Recommendations, Cervical and Thoracic Spine Disorders

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 174-175.

Decision rationale: According to the ACOEM guidelines, epidural steroid injections are not recommended. Invasive techniques are of questionable merit. The treatments do not provide any long-term functional benefit or reduce the need for surgery. In this case, the claimant had short-term benefit from prior CESI. The request for another cervical epidural steroid injection is not medically necessary.