

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0134804		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/27/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/04/2006
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/25/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/15/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/21/2014

### 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, has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine 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 patient is a 65 year-old male with the date of injury of 12/04/2006. The patient presents with low back pain, radiating down his legs and feet bilaterally with tingling or numbing sensations. He rates his low back pain as 5-10/10 on the pain scale, depending on his activities. There is diffuse lumbar paraspinal muscle tenderness. The range of lumbar motion is limited. His lateral bending is about 20-30 degrees, flexion about 60 degrees, and extension about 10 degrees. According to [REDACTED] report on 07/12/2014, diagnostic impressions are: 1) Headache. 2) Trigeminal neuralgia. 3) Cervical spine facet syndrome. 4) Cervical disc disease. 5) Cervical facet syndrome. 6) S/P left shoulder arthroscopic repair. 7) Lumbar disc disease. 8) Lumbar facet syndrome. 9) S/P bilateral knee arthroscopic repair. 10) Chronic pain. The utilization review determination being challenged is dated on 08/15/2014. [REDACTED] is the requesting provider, and he provided treatment reports from 10/05/2013 to 07/12/2014.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Lumbar MRI:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines CA MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG - TWC.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints  
Page(s): 303.

**Decision rationale:** The patient presents with pain in his low back, worsened by his activities. The patient is s/p left shoulder arthroscopy and bilateral knee arthroscopy. The request is for MRI of lumbar spine. MRI of lumbar spine on 05/21/2011 demonstrates: 1) There are a 2mm broad-based posterior disk/ endplate osteophyte complex at L1-L2 level and L2-L3 level. 2) There is a 3mm broad-based posterior disk/ endplate osteophyte complex at L3-L4 level. 3) There are hypertrophic changes of the facet joints at L4-L5 level and hypertrophy of ligamentum, flhyum, more prominent on the right side. 5) There are hypertrophic changes of the facet joints at L5-S1 level. [REDACTED] report on 07/12/2014 indicates that he requests MRI of lumbar spine because of the recent aggravation of the patient's low back pain. However, none of the reports provide an evidence of progressive neurologic deficit. ACOEM guidelines state "Unequivocal objective findings that identify specific nerve compromise on the neurologic examination are sufficient evidence to warrant imaging in patients who do not respond to treatment and who would consider surgery an option." ODG does not recommend it unless progression of neurologic deficit is suspected. In this case, such suspicions are not discussed in any of the reports. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.