

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0157804		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	10/01/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	01/02/2014
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/29/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	09/17/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/25/2014

### 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 Occupational 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:

51 year old female who was injured at work on 2 Jan 2012 although history of the specific incidence that caused the injury was not available for review. The injury was diagnosed as 1) Lumbar sprain/strain, 2) Medial meniscus tear right knee (she is now status post medial and lateral meniscectomy and ACL debridement as of Jun 2012), 3) Thoracic and lumbosacral radiculitis and 4) Osteoarthritis, right knee (diagnosis added by a consultant, an orthopedic surgeon). Her most recent exam on 8 Sep 2014 showed right knee range of motion to be 0-120 degrees (limited due to pain), patellofemoral crepitation on flexion and extension of the knee, and normal exam of knee ligaments. Right knee Xray on 28 Aug 2014, including a standing view, showed advanced degenerative changes. Lumbar MRI (18 Apr 2014) showed mild degenerative disc disease at multiple levels without nerve root compression or spinal stenosis. Treatment has included lumbar epidural steroid injection (gave 65% relief of symptoms), unloader knee brace, TENS (for the knee), physical therapy and medications (Bupropion, Soma, Gabapentin, Norco, Celebrex). The treating orthopedic consultant requested on 28 Aug 2014 total knee replacement surgery for the right knee and requested on 8 Sep 21014 use of hyaluronic acid injections in the right knee be done while waiting for the total knee operation to be approved. She was returned to modified work on 24 Mar 2014 (although she may actually have returned to modified work earlier than this there is no documentation of an earlier return).

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**1 series of three Euflexxa or Orthovisc injections for the right knee (once a week for 3 weeks): Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee And Leg Chapter

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 337-341, 346-352. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons Clinical Practice Guideline: Treatment of Osteoarthritis of the Knee, 2nd edition, Recommendation #9

**Decision rationale:** Euflexxa is a gel-like, highly purified form of hyaluronic acid (HA). HA itself is a naturally occurring substance found in the joints of the body that helps cushion, lubricate, and protect joints. The theory is that injection of HA into the joint space will improve joint function and lessen joint pain. However, studies available to date do not show this to be true and the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons do not recommend its use. The request is not medically necessary.