

Case Number:	CM14-0165496		
Date Assigned:	10/10/2014	Date of Injury:	02/20/2002
Decision Date:	11/12/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/22/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/07/2014

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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 62-year-old female with a 2/20/02 date of injury. At the time (10/1/14) of the Decision for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the cervical spine, there is documentation of subjective (neck pain) and objective (decreased range of motion with 30 degrees on the right and 20 degrees on the left) findings, current diagnoses (cervical spondylosis without myelopathy, degeneration of the cervical intervertebral discs, and kyphosis), and treatment to date (medications). There is no documentation of red flag diagnoses where plain film radiographs are negative, physiologic evidence (in the form of definitive neurologic findings on physical examination, electrodiagnostic studies, laboratory tests, or bone scans) of tissue insult or neurologic dysfunction, failure of conservative treatment; or diagnosis of nerve root compromise, based on clear history and physical examination findings, in preparation for invasive procedure.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

One MRI of the cervical spine: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 179-183.

Decision rationale: California Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule (MTUS) reference to American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) Guidelines identifies documentation of red flag diagnoses where plain film radiographs are negative, physiologic evidence (in the form of definitive neurologic findings on physical examination, electrodiagnostic studies, laboratory tests, or bone scans) of tissue insult or neurologic dysfunction, failure of conservative treatment; or diagnosis of nerve root compromise, based on clear history and physical examination findings, in preparation for invasive procedure; as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of an magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of cervical spondylosis without myelopathy, degeneration of the cervical intervertebral discs, and kyphosis. However, there is no documentation of red flag diagnoses where plain film radiographs are negative, physiologic evidence (in the form of definitive neurologic findings on physical examination, electrodiagnostic studies, laboratory tests, or bone scans) of tissue insult or neurologic dysfunction, failure of conservative treatment; or diagnosis of nerve root compromise, based on clear history and physical examination findings, in preparation for invasive procedure. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for one MRI of the cervical spine is not medically necessary.