

Case Number:	CM14-0172524		
Date Assigned:	10/24/2014	Date of Injury:	03/07/2014
Decision Date:	11/25/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/20/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/17/2014

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 Emergency 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:

The injured worker is a 39 year-old male, who sustained an injury on March 7, 2014. The mechanism of injury occurred when was pulling a hand truck. Diagnostics have included: August 1, 2014 lumbar MRI reported as showing L4-S1 disc bulges with L5 impingement. Treatments have included: medications, physical therapy, chiropractic, acupuncture. The current diagnoses are: lumbar disc disease, lumbar strain. The stated purpose of the request for Lumbar trigger point injections x3 to be done at one session was not noted. The request for Lumbar trigger point injections x3 to be done at one session was denied on September 20, 2014, citing a lack of documentation of myofascial findings such as a twitch response. Per the report dated September 10, 2014, the treating physician noted complaints of back pain. Exam findings included lumbar tenderness with restricted lumbar range of motion.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lumbar trigger point injections x3 to be done at one session: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for the use of Trigger point injections Page(s): 122.

Decision rationale: The requested Lumbar trigger point injections x3 to be done at one session, is not medically necessary. CA MTUS, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, Criteria for the use of Trigger point injections, Page 122, noted that "Trigger point injections with a local anesthetic may be recommended for the treatment of chronic low back or neck pain with myofascial pain syndrome when all of the following criteria are met: (1) Documentation of circumscribed trigger points with evidence upon palpation of a twitch response as well as referred pain; (2) Symptoms have persisted for more than three months; (3) Medical management therapies such as ongoing stretching exercises, physical therapy, NSAIDs and muscle relaxants have failed to control pain; (4) Radiculopathy is not present (by exam, imaging, or neuro-testing); (5) Not more than 3-4 injections per session; (6) No repeat injections unless a greater than 50% pain relief is obtained for six weeks after an injection and there is documented evidence of functional improvement; (7) Frequency should not be at an interval less than two months; (8) Trigger point injections with any substance (e.g., saline or glucose) other than local anesthetic with or without steroid are not recommended. (Colorado, 2002) (Blue Cross Blue Shield, 2004)". The injured worker has back pain. The treating physician has documented lumbar tenderness with restricted lumbar range of motion. The treating physician has not documented physical exam myofascial findings such as a positive twitch response. The criteria noted above not having been met, Lumbar trigger point injections x3 to be done at one session is not medically necessary.