

Case Number:	CM14-0026338		
Date Assigned:	06/23/2014	Date of Injury:	07/30/2013
Decision Date:	08/05/2014	UR Denial Date:	02/05/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/03/2014

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 Orthopedic Surgery and is licensed to practice in Pennsylvania. 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 claimant is a 39-year-old female, who twisted her right ankle while descending stairs on July 30, 2013. She also sustained injuries to the lumbar spine, lower extremities and left hip. Specific to the right ankle, an October 16, 2013, the MRI report identified tenosynovitis of the flexor hallucis longus tendon, a small joint effusion of the talofibular joint, and cystic erosion of the calcaneus. The treatment to date has included physical therapy and acupuncture. A June 17, 2014, follow-up report noted that the claimant denied any right foot or ankle pain. An examination showed no tenderness to palpation and full range of motion. The claimant was diagnosed with a right ankle sprain/strain. This request is for an orthopedic consultation of the right ankle.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Orthopedic consultation for the right ankle: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 14 Ankle and Foot Complaints Page(s): 374-375.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), 2nd Edition, (2004), Chapter 7 Independent Medical Examinations and Consultations, page 127.

Decision rationale: The ACOEM Guidelines would not support the request for an orthopedic consultation. The guidelines indicate that the occupational health practitioner may refer to other specialists if a diagnosis is uncertain or extremely complex when psychosocial factors are present, or when the plan or course of care may benefit from additional expertise. A referral may be for consultation to aid in the diagnosis, prognosis, therapeutic management, determination of medical stability, and permanent residual loss and/or the examinee's fitness for return to work. A consultant is usually asked to act in an advisory capacity but may sometimes take full responsibility for investigation and/or treatment of an examinee or patient. At the last clinical assessment, the claimant reported no pain, and the physical examination was negative. In addition, the prior MRI scan showed no evidence of structural abnormality. Given the absence of pain, the lack of physical findings, and the imaging results, the request for an orthopedic consultation would not be indicated as medically necessary.