

Case Number:	CM14-0029252		
Date Assigned:	09/10/2014	Date of Injury:	02/28/2009
Decision Date:	10/03/2014	UR Denial Date:	02/21/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/07/2014

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 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:

There were 73 pages provided for this review. The request for independent medical evaluation was signed on March 4, 2014. It was for bilateral knee Synvisc one injections. Per the records provided, the date of injury was February 28, 2009. The patient is described as a 59-year-old male in the diagnosis was bilateral knee osteoarthritis. The mechanism of injury is not documented. Synvisc injections were performed per the June 11, 2013 notes. As of July 25, 2013 there was no mention of knee but shoulder issues were discussed. On September 5, 2013 there again was no mention of the knee. A note from November 12, 2013 documents that overall the Synvisc seems to be helping and the recommendation was for a repeat Synvisc injection. There was no objective documentation of functional improvement, however, out of the injections. There are no office notes after the June 11, 2013 documenting that the Synvisc injection provided objective improvement or showed a solid knee physical examination. There are no office notes that provide evidence of specific lasting subjective and/or objective for functional improvement the patient received.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Bilateral knee synvisc one injection: 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 chapter

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee, under Hyalgan/Synvisc Knee Injections

Decision rationale: The MTUS is silent on these injections. The ODG note these injections are recommended as an option for osteoarthritis. They note that patients with moderate to severe pain associated with knee osteoarthritis OA that is not responding to oral therapy can be treated with intra-articular injections. The injections are for those who experience significantly symptomatic osteoarthritis but have not responded adequately to standard nonpharmacologic and pharmacologic treatments or are intolerant of these therapies (e.g., gastrointestinal problems related to anti-inflammatory medications). This patient however has no documentation of specific improvement out of the last injections, in regards to functionality. The request is not medically necessary.