

Case Number:	CM14-0039389		
Date Assigned:	06/27/2014	Date of Injury:	12/01/2008
Decision Date:	08/05/2014	UR Denial Date:	03/08/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/03/2014

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 Texas. 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 30-year-old female who reported an injury on 12/01/2008. The mechanism of injury was not specifically stated. The current diagnoses include carpometacarpal arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and tenosynovitis/De Quervain's. The current request is for the retrospective right Titan thumb Short Universal splint, issued on 01/23/2014. However, there was no physician progress report submitted on the requesting date of 01/23/2014. The injured worker was evaluated on 12/19/2013 with complaints of constant pain and swelling in the dorsal radius base of the first metacarpal. The injured worker also reported painful clicking at the base of the first metacarpal with active range of motion of the thumb. The current medications include Percocet. The injured worker utilized an Exos thumb spica brace and an Exogen bone stimulator. It was also noted that the injured worker was awaiting authorization for an arthrodesis of the right first to second metacarpal with bone grafting. The physical examination of the right hand/wrist revealed moderate swelling and tenderness of the radial dorsal base of the first metacarpal extending into the radial styloid, painful compression and/or abduction of the thumb, tenderness at the bony apex of the first web space, and a palmar scar from a carpal tunnel release. The treatment recommendations at that time included authorization for an arthrodesis of the right second to first metacarpal with bone grafting from the olecranon process.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retrospective (date of service: 1/23/14): Right Titan thumb Short Universal splint: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): Table 11-7: Summary of Recommendation for evaluating and managing forearm, wrist and hand complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Forearm, Wrist & Hand Chapter, Immobilization (treatment).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 265-266.

Decision rationale: The California MTUS/ACOEM Practice Guidelines state De Quervain's tendinitis, if not severe, may be treated with a wrist and thumb splint and acetaminophen, followed by non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), if tolerated, for four weeks prior to a corticosteroid injection. Any splinting or limitations placed on the hand, wrist, and forearm should not interfere with total body activity. As per the documentation submitted for this review, the injured worker does maintain a diagnosis of tenosynovitis/De Quervain's. However, it was also noted that the injured worker utilizes an Exos thumb spica brace. The medical necessity for a splint has not been established. As such, the request for a Right Titan thumb Short Universal splint is non-certified.