

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0048069		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/02/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	06/02/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	08/25/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/03/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/16/2014

### 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:

The patient is a 40-year-old male who has submitted a claim for right foot and right ankle sprain/strain, partial tear of the right anterior talofibular ligament; and lumbar sprain/strain, disc protrusion, annular tear, and right sacral neuropathy associated with an industrial injury date of June 6, 2012. Medical records from 2013-2014 were reviewed. Progress reports were handwritten and some were illegible. The patient complained of right foot and ankle pain, rated 4/10 in severity. Physical examination of the foot and ankle was not available on the medical records submitted for review. MRI of the right ankle, dated August 24, 2012, revealed anterolateral ankle impingement, chronic partial tear of anterior talofibular ligament, and small tibiotalar joint effusion. Treatment to date has included medications, physical therapy, functional capacity evaluation, home exercise program, activity modification, and lumbar epidural steroid injections. Utilization review, dated April 3, 2014, denied the request for MRI right ankle because there was lack of documented physical examination findings regarding the patient's right ankle and there was failure to indicate whether the patient has been treated with conservative care.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**MRI Right Ankle:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 14 Ankle and Foot Complaints Page(s): 372-374, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Chronic pain programs (functional restoration programs) Page(s): 30-32.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 14 Ankle and Foot Complaints Page(s): 372-374. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Foot and Ankle Chapter, MagneticResonance Imaging.

**Decision rationale:** According to pages 372-374 of the ACOEM Practice Guidelines referenced by CA MTUS, disorders of soft tissue yield negative radiographs and do not warrant other studies, e.g. magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). MRI may be helpful to clarify a diagnosis such as osteochondritis dissecans in cases of delayed recovery. In addition, ODG states that ankle MRI is indicated with chronic ankle pain, pain of uncertain etiology, and when plain films are normal. In this case, an MRI of the right ankle was done last August 24, 2012, which revealed anterolateral ankle impingement, chronic partial tear of anterior talofibular ligament, and small tibiotalar joint effusion. The records did not clearly reflect a significant change in right ankle symptoms. Furthermore, conservative management to the right ankle was not documented. There is no clear indication for a repeat MRI at this time. Therefore, the request for MRI right ankle is not medically necessary.