

Case Number:	CM14-0052860		
Date Assigned:	07/07/2014	Date of Injury:	08/22/2008
Decision Date:	08/25/2014	UR Denial Date:	03/26/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/21/2014

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 injured worker is a represented [REDACTED] employee who has filed a claim for chronic knee pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of August 22, 2008. Thus far, the injured worker has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; attorney representation; unspecified amounts of physical therapy; knee corticosteroid injections; and viscosupplementation injections. In a Utilization Review Report dated March 26, 2014, the claims administrator denied a request for Synvisc (viscosupplementation) injection. The injured worker's attorney subsequently appealed. A January 20, 2014 progress note documents that the injured worker presented with bilateral knee pain. The injured worker had end-stage left knee arthritis and was status post a right knee total knee arthroplasty. A left knee Kenalog injection was performed. Authorization for a Synvisc injection was also sought. The injured worker had advanced knee arthritis noted on X-rays, demonstrating medial compartmental narrowing. It was stated that the injured worker wished to avoid knee surgery. On February 21, 2014, the attending provider noted that the request for viscosupplementation injection had been denied.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Synvisc-One injection 6ml right knee: Overturned

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints.

Decision rationale: ACOEM Guidelines state that viscosupplementation injections are indicated in the treatment of advanced knee arthritis, particularly in injured workers who wish to avoid surgery. In this case, the attending provider noted that the injured worker did wish to avoid surgery on the implicated right knee. Additionally, the injured worker does have a history of advanced knee arthritis about the same knee. The injured worker has reportedly had earlier viscosupplementation injections with a temporarily favorable response. Provision of a repeat Synvisc-One injection is therefore indicated. As such, the request is medically necessary.