

Case Number:	CM14-0053795		
Date Assigned:	07/07/2014	Date of Injury:	05/21/2013
Decision Date:	09/23/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/01/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/22/2014

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 42 year old female who sustained a vocational injury on 5/21/13 as a result of repetitive job duties, working as an assembler. The medical records provided for review document that the claimant underwent right carpal tunnel release on 3/7/14. The office note dated 3/25/14 identified diagnoses of status post right carpal tunnel release, bilateral wrist tendinitis and right carpal tunnel syndrome. This review is for retrospective authorization for a Q-Tech cold therapy recovery system with wrap for 21 days.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Q-Tech Cold Tehrapy Recovery System with Wrap x21 days: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 265. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 271. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG); Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: Continuous Cold Therapy; Knee and Leg chapter: Game ready and Continuous Cryotherapy Recommended as an option only in the postoperative setting, with regular assessment to avoid frostbite. Postoperative use generally should be no more than 7 days, including home use. A prospective randomized study was performed comparing the

efficacy of a temperature-controlled cooling blanket (CCT) or a standard ice pack in the postoperative treatment of 72 patients with carpal tunnel syndrome. Patients who used CCT showed significantly greater reduction in pain, edema (wrist circumference), and narcotic use postop than did those using ice therapy. In this study the controlled cold therapy was only used for 3 days. (Hochberg, 2001) Complications related to cryotherapy, including frostbite, are rare but can be devastating. Game Ready is an accelerated recovery system Recommended as an option after surgery, but not for nonsurgical treatment. See Continuous-flow cryotherapy. The Game Ready system combines Continuous-flow cryotherapy with the use of vaso-compression. While there are studies on Continuous-flow cryotherapy, there are no published high quality studies on the Game Ready device or any other combined system. However, in a recent yet-to-be-published RCT, patients treated with compressive cryotherapy after ACL reconstruction had better pain relief and less dependence on narcotic use than patients treated with cryotherapy alone. (Waterman, 2011) Continuous-flow cryotherapy Recommended as an option after surgery, but not for nonsurgical treatment. Postoperative use generally may be up to 7 days, including home use. In the postoperative setting, continuous-flow cryotherapy units have been proven to decrease pain, inflammation, swelling, and narcotic usage; however, the effect on more frequently treated acute injuries (eg, muscle strains and contusions) has not been fully evaluated. Continuous-flow cryotherapy units provide regulated temperatures through use of power to circulate ice water in the cooling packs. (Hubbard, 2004) (Morsi, 2002) (Barber, 2000) The available scientific literature is insufficient to document that the use of continuous-flow cooling systems (versus ice packs) is associated with a benefit beyond convenience and patient compliance (but these may be worthwhile benefits) in the outpatient setting. (BlueCross BlueShield, 2005) This meta-analysis showed that cryotherapy has a statistically significant benefit in postoperative pain control, while no improvement in postoperative range of motion or drainage was found. As the cryotherapy apparatus is fairly inexpensive, easy to use, has a high level of patient satisfaction, and is rarely associated with adverse events, we believe that cryotherapy is justified in the postoperative management of knee surgery. (Raynor, 2005) There is limited information to support active vs passive cryo units. Aetna considers p

Decision rationale: The California ACOEM Guidelines and supported by the Official Disability Guidelines do not recommend the request for the Q-Tech cold therapy recovery system with wrap for 21 days. The ACOEM Guidelines recommend the use of cold packs for home use to control pain. The Q-Tech cold therapy recovery system is similar to a Game Ready accelerator recovery system in the fact that it provides continuous flow cryotherapy but with compression. Currently, the Official Disability Guidelines do not support continuous flow cryotherapy with compression such as Game Ready accelerated recovered systems and Q-Tech therapy cold therapy as medically necessary due to the lack of published high quality studies supporting compression in the Game Ready device or any other combined system. In addition, the Official Disability guidelines only recommend using a continuous cold therapy device for up to seven days postoperatively and this request is for 21 days. Therefore, based on the ACOEM Guidelines and the Official Disability Guidelines, the request for the Q-Tech cold therapy recovery system with wrap x21 days cannot be considered medically necessary.