

Case Number:	CM14-0056773		
Date Assigned:	07/09/2014	Date of Injury:	12/27/2006
Decision Date:	08/27/2014	UR Denial Date:	03/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/28/2014

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 Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine 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 47-year-old male with a date of injury of 12/27/2006. The listed diagnosis per the treater is bilateral knee degenerative joint disease (DJD). According to progress report 02/19/2014, the patient presents for the third Euflexxa right knee injection. Right knee continues with pain with range of motion. The left knee has an increase of pain without clicking. Examination of the left knee revealed pain with range of motion and positive patellar crepitation, positive grind, and positive patellofemoral. Treater is requesting Euflexxa injection a series of three for the left knee. Utilization review denied the request on 03/24/2014.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Euflexxa injection x3 Left Knee: Overturned

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 & Leg (updated 01/20/14), Hyaluronic acid injections.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee Chapter, Hyaluronic acid (Synvisc) knee injection.(<http://www.odg-twc.com/odgtwc/knee.htm#Hyaluronicacidinjections>).

Decision rationale: This patient presents with bilateral knee pain and decrease in range of motion. The patient most recently underwent a course of three injections for the right knee. The treater is now requesting Euflexxa injection a series of three for the left knee due to patient's positive findings pain and decreased range of motion. Euflexxa is a 1% sodium hyaluronate. ACOEM and MTUS do not discuss Hyaluronic acid knee injections. The Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) recommends Hyaluronic acid injection as a possible option for severe osteoarthritis for patients who have not responded adequately to recommended conservative treatments (exercise, NSAIDs or acetaminophen); to potentially delay total knee replacement, but in recent quality studies the magnitude of improvement appears modest at best. Given patient's diagnosis of knee degenerative joint disease (DJD) and failed conservative care, a course of Hyaluronic injections may be warranted at this time. Recommendation is medically necessary.