

Case Number:	CM14-0057595		
Date Assigned:	07/09/2014	Date of Injury:	12/03/2012
Decision Date:	08/08/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/02/2014
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 Orthopaedic Surgery 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:

This 60-year-old male sustained an industrial injury on 12/3/12. Injury occurred when the patient was knocked to the ground by an employee handling a sheet of plywood. The patient underwent right knee arthroscopic partial medial meniscectomy on 10/2/13. The operative findings documented minimal chondromalacia patellofemoral joint and normal medial and lateral compartment articular cartilage. The 3/17/14 orthopedic report cited right knee pain and sense of give way. The patient did not feel the arthroscopy was beneficial. The physical exam documented the right knee was very tender over the medial joint line, and range of motion was 0-115 degrees. There was pain to valgus stress. X-rays showed narrowing of the medial compartment and genu varum. The treatment plan recommended 3 Orthovisc for the right knee and high tibial osteotomy to unload the medial compartment and improve alignment. The 4/29/14 orthopedic report cited persistent right knee pain. The physical exam documented no effusion, medial tenderness, mild crepitus and range of motion 0-115 degrees. The diagnosis was medial meniscus tear right knee. The traction plan recommended a right knee cortisone injection.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Orthovisc Injections Right Knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM Guidelines, Visconsupplementation section Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee Chapter, Hyaluronic section.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee and Leg, Hyaluronic acid injections.

Decision rationale: The California MTUS guidelines do not provide recommendations for Orthovisc injections in chronic knee complaints. The ODG state that hyaluronic acid injections are recommended for patients who experience significantly symptomatic osteoarthritis but have not responded adequately to standard non-pharmacologic and pharmacologic treatments. Hyaluronic acid injections are not recommended for any other indications such as chondromalacia patellae, facet joint arthropathy, osteochondritis dissecans, or patellofemoral arthritis, patellofemoral syndrome (patellar knee pain), plantar nerve entrapment syndrome, or for use in joints other than the knee because the effectiveness of hyaluronic acid injections for these indications has not been established. The guideline criteria have not been met. There is no detailed documentation that recent standard pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic conservative treatment had been tried and failed. There is no clear diagnosis of osteoarthritis. Therefore, this request for Orthovisc injections for the right knee is not medically necessary.