

Case Number:	CM14-0061510		
Date Assigned:	07/09/2014	Date of Injury:	11/10/2012
Decision Date:	08/29/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/10/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/02/2014

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, Texas, and Connecticut. 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 is a 63-year-old female who sustained a trip and fall injury at work on 11/10/12. The claimant's current working diagnosis is osteoarthritis of the metatarsophalangeal joint and exostosis of the right foot. The report of the office visit dated 05/27/14 documented examination findings of a 30degree arc of motion with a large spur of the metatarsophalangeal head of the first big toe on the right foot. It was documented that x-rays showed almost complete loss of the joint space with osteophyte formation and sclerosis. The report of a 06/05/14 x-ray of the right foot revealed mild degenerative changes of the first metatarsophalangeal joint and mild hallux deformity with a small, soft tissue and osseous bunion. In a letter dated 06/13/14, it was noted that the claimant had spurring and tenderness and had failed a steroid injection as it gave her only temporary relief. The current request is for a right foot first metatarsophalangeal arthroplasty.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Right Foot 1st Metatarsophalangeal Arthroplasty: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 14 Ankle and Foot Complaints Page(s): 374-375.. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG); Foot & Ankle chapter - Focal joint resurfacing.

Decision rationale: The California ACOEM Guidelines and the Official Disability Guidelines do not support the request for right foot first metatarsophalangeal joint arthroplasty. The medical records fail to support that the claimant has a significant functional and vocational deficit due to her current working diagnosis. There is a lack of documentation supporting that the claimant has attempted, failed, and exhausted traditional first line conservative treatment options such as activity modification, shoe wear modification, formal physical therapy, and anti-inflammatory medications. In addition, there is some discrepancy regarding x-ray report findings. A formal x-ray report dated 6/5/14 noted that there were mild degenerative changes of the first metatarsophalangeal joint with mild hallux deformity with soft tissue and osseous bunion. In an addendum letter provided for review, significant severe end stage degenerative change was noted about the first metatarsophalangeal joint. Subsequently, there would need to be formal clarification of the radiograph results prior to considering the medical necessity for the requested procedure. Based on the documentation presented for review and in accordance with California ACOEM, and Official Disability Guidelines, the request for the right foot first metatarsophalangeal joint arthroplasty cannot be considered medically necessary.