

Case Number:	CM14-0188855		
Date Assigned:	11/25/2014	Date of Injury:	02/12/2009
Decision Date:	01/12/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/03/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/12/2014

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:

Patient is a 49 year-old female with date of injury 02/12/2009. The medical document associated with the request for authorization, a primary treating physician's progress report, dated 10/21/2014, lists subjective complaints as pain in the lumbar spine with radicular symptoms down the bilateral lower extremities. PR-2 supplied for review was hand-written and illegible. Objective findings: Examination of the left knee revealed moderate effusion with spasm and guarding. Patient was unable to do McMurray's test. No examination of the lumbar spine was recorded. No neurological examination was documented as well. Diagnosis: 1. Strain/sprain of the left shoulder, elbow and wrist 2. Bilateral Carpal Tunnel Syndrome 3. Lumbosacral strain/sprain. No records of previous MRIs were found in the documentation provided for review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

EMG of the left lower bilateral extremities: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disabilities Guidelines

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Low Back - Lumbar & Thoracic (Acute & Chronic), EMGs (electromyography)

Decision rationale: According to the Official Disability Guidelines, EMG's are recommended as an option and may be useful to obtain unequivocal evidence of radiculopathy, after 1-month conservative therapy, but EMG's are not necessary if radiculopathy is already clinically obvious. There is no documentation in the medical record of a lumbar examination or lower extremity neurologic examination which would indicate radiculopathy. EMG of the left lower extremity is not medically necessary.

NCV of the left lower bilateral extremities: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG); Low Back.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Low Back - Lumbar & Thoracic (Acute & Chronic), Nerve conduction studies (NCS)

Decision rationale: According to the Official Disability Guidelines, nerve conduction studies are not recommended. There is minimal justification for performing nerve conduction studies when a patient is presumed to have symptoms on the basis of radiculopathy neurological testing procedures have limited overall diagnostic accuracy in detecting disc herniation with suspected radiculopathy. Nerve conduction studies of the left lower extremity are not medically necessary.

NCV of the right lower bilateral extremities: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG); Low Back .

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Low Back - Lumbar & Thoracic (Acute & Chronic), Nerve conduction studies (NCS)

Decision rationale: According to the Official Disability Guidelines, Nerve Conduction Studies are not recommended. There is minimal justification for performing nerve conduction studies when a patient is presumed to have symptoms on the basis of radiculopathy neurological testing procedures have limited overall diagnostic accuracy in detecting disc herniation with suspected radiculopathy. Nerve conduction studies of the right lower extremity are not medically necessary.

EMG of the right lower Bilateral extremities: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG); Low Back.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Low Back - Lumbar & Thoracic (Acute & Chronic), EMGs (electromyography)

Decision rationale: According to the Official Disability Guidelines, EMG's are recommended as an option and may be useful to obtain unequivocal evidence of radiculopathy, after 1-month conservative therapy, but EMG's are not necessary if radiculopathy is already clinically obvious. There is no documentation in the medical record of a lumbar examination or lower extremity neurologic examination which would indicate radiculopathy. EMG of the right lower extremity is not medically necessary.