

Case Number:	CM14-0189941		
Date Assigned:	11/21/2014	Date of Injury:	03/04/2014
Decision Date:	01/08/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/18/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/13/2014

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 and Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain 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:

This is a patient with a date of injury of 3/4/14. A utilization review determination dated 10/18/14 recommends non-certification of MRI. 11/12/14 medical report identifies that the patient fell on a concrete floor and had worsening knee pain. The knee swelled up and there was significant medial joint line tenderness. No x-rays were done. The provider noted that MTUS does not address MRI studies of the knee and ODG clearly indicates that acute trauma to the knee is one of the indications for MRI imaging.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI of right knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 13-3,343. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee & Leg, MRI

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for MRI right knee, CA MTUS and ACOEM note that, in absence of red flags (such as fracture/dislocation, infection, or neurologic/vascular compromise), diagnostic testing is not generally helpful in the first 4-6 weeks. After 4-6 weeks,

if there is the presence of locking, catching, or objective evidence of ligament injury on physical exam, MRI is recommended. ODG supports MRI for acute injuries when there is significant trauma such as a motor vehicle accident or suspicion for dislocation or cartilage and/or ligament disruption. Within the medical information made available for review, the provider noted that the MTUS does not address knee MRIs, but the guidelines clearly support this diagnostic imaging when there are red flags, locking, catching, or evidence of ligamentous injury. In this case, only pain and joint line tenderness were noted. Furthermore, the provider noted that ODG recommends MRI following trauma, but ODG clearly notes that a motor vehicle accident is an example of significant trauma warranting MRI prior to initial imaging and conservative treatment, and it does not appear that a fall while walking would meet that criteria. ODG also supports MRI in the presence of suspicion for cartilage disruption (such as a meniscal tear), but in the presence only of tenderness with no catching, locking, or other evidence suggestive of meniscal pathology, there is no clear indication for the MRI. Furthermore, the provider noted that x-rays have not been done, and given that the criteria for evaluation of acute trauma have not been met and ODG does not support MRI for other indications without first performing x-rays, the need for MRI is not established per the CA MTUS, ACOEM, and ODG. In the absence of clarity regarding the above issues, the currently requested right knee MRI is not medically necessary.