

Case Number:	CM14-0199966		
Date Assigned:	12/10/2014	Date of Injury:	03/12/2012
Decision Date:	01/27/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/25/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/01/2014

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 Rehab, has a subspecialty in Pain Management 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 male patient with the date of injury of March 12, 2012. A Utilization Review dated November 25, 2014 recommended non-certification of 1 lumbar corset between 10/28/2014 and 1/18/2015. A Progress Report dated October 28, 2014 identifies Subjective Complaints of lower extremity radiculopathy and significant problems with his spine. Objective Findings identify tenderness in the paraspinal musculature of the lumbar region. Midline tenderness is noted in the lumbar spine. Muscle spasm is positive in the lumbar spine. Decreased lumbar spine range of motion with spasm. Sensory testing with a pinwheel is decreased in the L3-4, L4-5, and L5-S1 distributions on the left. Grade 4 strength on the plantar flexor and toe extensor. Diagnoses identify significant lumbar discopathy, significant left leg numbness, and three-level spinal stenosis with degenerative discopathy and facet arthropathy. Treatment Plan identifies lumbar corset.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 lumbar corset: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 298, 301. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Low Back - Lumbar & Thoracic (Acute & Chronic)

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 301. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Low Back Chapter, Lumbar Supports.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for 1 lumbar corset, ACOEM guidelines state that lumbar supports have not been shown to have any lasting benefit beyond the acute phase of symptom relief. ODG states that lumbar supports are not recommended for prevention. They go on to state the lumbar support are recommended as an option for compression fractures and specific treatment of spondylolisthesis, documented instability, and for treatment of nonspecific low back pain. ODG goes on to state that for nonspecific low back pain, compared to no lumbar support, elastic lumbar belt maybe more effective than no belt at improving pain at 30 and 90 days in people with subacute low back pain lasting 1 to 3 months. However, the evidence was very weak. Within the documentation available for review, it does not appear that this patient is in the acute or subacute phase of his treatment. Additionally, there is no documentation indicating that the patient has a diagnosis of compression fracture, spondylolisthesis, or instability. As such, the currently requested 1 lumbar corset is not medically necessary.