

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0207811		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	12/19/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/03/1997
<b>Decision Date:</b>	02/12/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	12/01/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	12/11/2014

### 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 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 72 year old female with a 12/3/97 injury date. In an 11/11/14 note, the patient complained of ongoing 7/10 left knee pain with stiffness and swelling. The patient remarked that the pain was "horrible." Objective findings included left knee tenderness. It was noted that the patient's most recent series of left knee Euflexxa injections was on 8/29/14. A 10/29/13 left knee MRI revealed osteoarthritic changes. Diagnostic impression: left knee osteoarthritis. Treatment to date: medications and viscosupplemental injections. A UR decision on 12/1/14 denied the request for three series of left knee Euflexxa injections under fluoroscopy with arthrogram because there was documented subjective evidence that the previous series of left knee injections were not alleviating the patient's symptoms.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Three series of intra-articular left knee injections under fluoroscopy with arthrogram and Euflexxa:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), knee and leg

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

**Decision rationale:** CA MTUS does not address this issue. ODG recommends viscosupplementation injections in patients with significantly symptomatic osteoarthritis that has not responded adequately to standard non-pharmacologic and pharmacologic treatments or is intolerant of these therapies; OR is not a candidate for total knee replacement or has failed previous knee surgery for arthritis; OR a younger patient wanting to delay total knee replacement; AND failure of conservative treatment; and plain x-ray or arthroscopy findings diagnostic of osteoarthritis. A repeat series of injections is indicated if there is relief for 6-9 months and symptoms recur. However, according to the available documentation, it does not appear that the injections that took place on 8/29/14 have alleviated any of the patient's symptoms. If there was a period of short-term relief, it was not mentioned. An additional series of Euflexxa injections would appear to be of questionable benefit at this point. Therefore, the request for three series of intra-articular left knee injections under fluoroscopy with arthrogram and Euflexxa is not medically necessary.