

Case Number:	CM14-0042043		
Date Assigned:	06/30/2014	Date of Injury:	10/05/1994
Decision Date:	03/27/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/27/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/09/2014

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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:

State(s) of Licensure: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Orthopedic Surgery

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

The injured worker is a 48 year old male, who sustained a work related injury on 10/5/94. The diagnoses have included lumbar spine degenerative disc disease, degenerative joint disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease, depression and anxiety. Treatments to date have included low back surgery x 2, lumbar spine MRI, oral medications, physical therapy, and spinal cord stimulator trial. In the PR-2 dated 3/6/14, the injured worker complains of chronic and severe pain and pain that radiates down left leg with numbness and tingling. He rates his pain a 5-8/10 on medication and 7-8/10 off medications. He stated that he had 80% pain relief with spinal cord stimulator trial. On 3/27/14, Utilization Review non-certified requests for pre-op labs, chest x-ray and EKG for spinal cord stimulator implant. The California MTUS, ACOEM Guidelines, were cited.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Pre-operative laboratory testing: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <https://acoempracguides.org/Chronic Pain; Table 2 Summary of Recommendations, Chronic Pain Disorders>

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Low Back, Preoperative testing

Decision rationale: CA MTUS/ACOEM is silent on the issue of preoperative clearance and testing. ODG, Low back, Preoperative testing general, is utilized. This chapter states that preoperative testing is guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. ODG states, These investigations can be helpful to stratify risk, direct anesthetic choices, and guide postoperative management, but often are obtained because of protocol rather than medical necessity. The decision to order preoperative tests should be guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. Patients with signs or symptoms of active cardiovascular disease should be evaluated with appropriate testing, regardless of their preoperative status. Electrocardiography is recommended for patients undergoing high risk surgery and those undergoing intermediate risk surgery who have additional risk factors. Patients undergoing low risk surgery do not require electrocardiography. Based on the information provided for review, there is no indication of any of these clinical scenarios present in this case. In this case the patient is a healthy 48 year old without comorbidities or physical examination findings concerning to warrant preoperativelaboratory testing prior to the proposed surgical procedure. Therefore the determination is for non-certification.

Pre-operative chest X-ray: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <https://acoempracguides.org/Chronic Pain; Table 2 Summary of Recommendations, Chronic Pain Disorders>

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Low back, Preoperative testing

Decision rationale: CA MTUS/ACOEM is silent on the issue of preoperative clearance and testing. ODG, Low back, Preoperative testing general, is utilized. This chapter states that preoperative testing is guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. ODG states, These investigations can be helpful to stratify risk, direct anesthetic choices, and guide postoperative management, but often are obtained because of protocol rather than medical necessity. The decision to order preoperative tests should be guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. Patients with signs or symptoms of active cardiovascular disease should be evaluated with appropriate testing, regardless of their preoperative status. Electrocardiography is recommended for patients undergoing high risk surgery and those undergoing intermediate risk surgery who have additional risk factors. Patients undergoing low risk surgery do not require electrocardiography. Based on the information provided for review, there is no indication of any of these clinical scenarios present in this case. In this case the patient is a healthy 48 year old without

comorbidities or physical examination findings concerning to warrant preoperative chest x-ray prior to the proposed surgical procedure. Therefore the determination is for non-certification.

Pre-operative EKG (Electrocardiogram): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <https://acoempracguides.org/Chronic Pain; Table 2 Summary of Recommendations, Chronic Pain Disorders>

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Low back, Preoperative testing

Decision rationale: CA MTUS/ACOEM is silent on the issue of preoperative clearance and testing. ODG, Low back, Preoperative testing general, is utilized. This chapter states that preoperative testing is guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. ODG states, These investigations can be helpful to stratify risk, direct anesthetic choices, and guide postoperative management, but often are obtained because of protocol rather than medical necessity. The decision to order preoperative tests should be guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. Patients with signs or symptoms of active cardiovascular disease should be evaluated with appropriate testing, regardless of their preoperative status. Electrocardiography is recommended for patients undergoing high risk surgery and those undergoing intermediate risk surgery who have additional risk factors. Patients undergoing low risk surgery do not require electrocardiography. Based on the information provided for review, there is no indication of any of these clinical scenarios present in this case. In this case the patient is a healthy 48 year old without comorbidities or physical examination findings concerning to warrant a preoperative EKG prior to the proposed surgical procedure. Therefore the determination is for non-certification.