

Case Number:	CM15-0183518		
Date Assigned:	09/24/2015	Date of Injury:	03/18/2015
Decision Date:	11/03/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/31/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/18/2015

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: Internal Medicine

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 52 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 3-18-15. The injured worker is being treated for patella fracture and stiffness of joint. Treatment to date has included open reduction and internal fixation of right patella, physical therapy, right knee arthroscopy with lysis of adhesions, synovectomy and chondroplasty; oral medications including Zofran, Percocet and Hydrocodone and activity modifications. X-ray of right knee performed on 6-3-15 revealed status post band wiring with well-maintained fracture reduction and no evidence of hardware loosening with callus present. On 8-5-15, the injured worker complains of residual stiffness and pain on the inside of her right knee joint following surgery 42 days prior; she is unable to kneel or climb stairs. Physical exam performed on 8-15-15 revealed well healed incisions of right knee without joint effusion and thigh and calf compartments are soft and compressible. The treatment plan included a request for authorization for cortisone injection and a CPM machine. On 8-31-15 a request for segmental gradient pressure pneumatic appliance, half leg, knee was non-certified by utilization review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Segmental gradient pressure pneumatic appliance half leg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee & Leg Chapter Acute & Chronic): Compression Garments.

Decision rationale: Based on ODG guidelines, compression garments are recommended. Good evidence for the use of compression is available, but little is known about dosimetry in compression, for how long and at what level compression should be applied. Low levels of compression 10-30 mmHg applied by stockings are effective in the management of telangiectases after sclerotherapy, varicose veins in pregnancy, the prevention of edema and deep vein thrombosis (DVT). High levels of compression produced by bandaging and strong compression stockings (30-40 mmHg) are effective at healing leg ulcers and preventing progression of post-thrombotic syndrome as well as in the management of lymphedema. (Parsch, 2008) (Nelson-Cochrane, 2008) See also Lymphedema pumps; Venous thrombosis. Recent research: There is inconsistent evidence for compression stockings to prevent post-thrombotic syndrome (PTS) after first-time proximal deep venous thrombosis (DVT). The findings of this study do not support routine wearing of elastic compression stockings (ECS) after DVT. PTS is a chronic disorder affecting 40%-48% of patients during the first 2 years after acute symptomatic DVT. The American College of Chest Physicians currently recommends wearing compression stockings with 30-40 mm Hg pressure at the ankle for 2 years to reduce the risk of developing PTS, but the data supporting this recommendation are inconsistent, and come from small randomized trials without blinding. This high quality double-blind randomized trial compared compression stockings to sham stockings (without therapeutic compression) in 806 patients with proximal DVT and concluded otherwise. In this case, the patient has not been diagnosed with post-thrombotic syndrome, nor was there mention of lymphedema. Compression garments are indicated after DVT, and for management of lymphedema. Therefore, based on the ODG guidelines and the evidence in this case, the request for segmental gradient pressure pneumatic appliance half leg is not medically necessary.