

Case Number:	CM15-0194725		
Date Assigned:	10/08/2015	Date of Injury:	04/21/2000
Decision Date:	11/18/2015	UR Denial Date:	09/10/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/05/2015

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: Arizona, California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

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 63 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 4-21-00. The injured worker is diagnosed with lumbar spine pain, lumbar spine sprain and lumbar spine radiculopathy. Her work status is modified duty. Notes dated 5-26-15 - 9-1-15 reveals the injured worker presented with complaints of constant, moderate - severe low back pain rated at 7-9 out of 10. Physical examinations dated 7-15-15 - 9-1-15 revealed tenderness to palpation with associated spastic activities and, limited range of motion with pain noted. Treatment to date has included acupuncture, which provides moderate relief, per note dated 8-4-15, medications and a cane for ambulation assistance. A request for authorization dated 9-1-15 for lumbar spine MRI is denied, per Utilization Review letter dated 9-10-15.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI of the lumbar spine: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Low Back Complaints 2004.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Low Back Complaints 2004, Section(s): Summary.

Decision rationale: According to the ACOEM guidelines, an MRI of the lumbar spine is recommended for red flag symptoms such as cauda equina, tumor, infection, or uncertain neurological diagnoses not determined or equivocal on physical exam. There were no red flag symptoms. There was no plan for surgery. The request for an MRI of the lumbar spine is not medically necessary.