

Case Number:	CM15-0216626		
Date Assigned:	11/06/2015	Date of Injury:	11/06/2013
Decision Date:	12/21/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/03/2015

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: New Jersey

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 50-year-old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 11-6-13. The injured worker was being treated for cervical radiculopathy lumbosacral radiculopathy and knee tendinitis and bursitis. On 9-14-15, the injured worker reports he has been authorized for a right knee arthroscopy, which has been scheduled. On 9-14-15 physical exam revealed spasm, tenderness and guarding of paravertebral musculature of cervical and lumbar spine with loss of range of motion in both; decreased sensation bilaterally in C5 and L5 dermatomes, right knee crepitus with medial and lateral joint line tenderness and positive McMurray's test. Treatment to date has included oral medications including Orphenadrine 100mg, Meloxicam, Gabapentin 400mg and Hydrocodone 10mg; and activity modifications. On 9-24-15 request for authorization was submitted for cold therapy recovery system with wrap. On 10-13-15 request for cold therapy recovery system with wrap for 21-day rental dispensed on 9-25-15 was modified to 7-day rental by utilization review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retrospective request for Q-Tech Cold Therapy Recovery System with wrap to the right knee for a 21 day rental (DOS: 9/25/15): 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 & Leg Chapter.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Knee Complaints 2004, Section(s): Initial Care. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee and Leg section, Continuous-flow cryotherapy and Cold/heat packs.

Decision rationale: The MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines do not address specifically water circulating cold/heat pad with pump. The MTUS ACOEM Guidelines mention that at-home local applications of heat or cold for knee pain are as effective as those performed by therapists. The ODG also states that cold/heat packs applied at home are recommended as an option for acute knee pain for the first few days of acute complaints and thereafter as needed with either heat or cold as needed for acute exacerbations. The ODG also states that continuous-flow cryotherapy is recommended as an option after knee surgery up to 7 days, but not for nonsurgical treatment. In the case of this worker, the provider requested 21 days of cold-therapy to follow knee arthroscopy. Although cold therapy is recommended following surgery, arthroscopy is not likely to require any rental cold therapy device and simpler home cold application for a few days should be sufficient. Regardless, even if the cold therapy device were warranted, the rental duration is longer than necessary. Therefore, this request will be considered medically unnecessary.