

Case Number:	CM15-0033023		
Date Assigned:	02/26/2015	Date of Injury:	05/01/2013
Decision Date:	04/10/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/20/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/23/2015

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, Michigan, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular 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 35 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 4/30/2013. She reports low back pain while moving boxes at work. Diagnoses include lumbar radiculopathy. Treatments to date include physical therapy and medications. A progress note from the treating provider dated 2/18/2015 indicates the injured worker reported low back pain that radiated to the right lower leg. On 2/20/2015, Utilization Review non-certified the request for lumbar epidural steroid injection, citing MTUS.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lumbar Epidural Steroid Injection L5-S1: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Epidural steroid injections (ESIs).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 309.

Decision rationale: According to MTUS guidelines, epidural steroid injection is optional for radicular pain to avoid surgery. It may offer short-term benefit, however there is no significant

long-term benefit or reduction for the need of surgery. Furthermore, the patient file does not document that the patient is a candidate for surgery. In addition, documentation does not contain objective findings on examination and recent electrodiagnostic study to support the presence of radiculopathy. Therefore, the request for Lumbar Epidural Steroid Injection L5-S1 is not medically necessary.