

Case Number:	CM15-0044133		
Date Assigned:	03/16/2015	Date of Injury:	02/27/2001
Decision Date:	04/17/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/03/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/09/2015

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: Iowa, Illinois, Hawaii

Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational Medicine, Public Health & General Preventive 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 44 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on February 27, 2001. He reported left knee injury. The injured worker was diagnosed as having muscle weakness, chondromalacia of patella, and left lower leg joint pain. Treatment to date has included medications, knee bracing. Currently he complains of continued left knee pain. The records indicate the February 18, 2015; examination is unchanged from the previous examination on January 7, 2015. He continues with crepitus at the patellofemoral joint, ligamentous laxity secondary to degenerative changes. The treatment plans includes waiting for authorization on a new maximum medical improvement report, and follow up in one month. The request for authorization is for x-rays of the left knee.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

X-rays of the left knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 34. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee Chapter.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints Page(s): 330-336, 341-343. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee and Leg, Radiography.

Decision rationale: ACOEM states regarding knee evaluations, The position of the American College of Radiology (ACR) in its most recent appropriateness criteria list the following clinical parameters as predicting absence of significant fracture and may be used to support the decision not to obtain a radiograph following knee trauma: Patient is able to walk without a limp, Patient had a twisting injury and there is no effusion. The clinical parameters for ordering knee radiographs following trauma in this population are: Joint effusion within 24 hours of direct blow or fall, Palpable tenderness over fibular head or patella, Inability to walk (four steps) or bear weight immediately or within a week of the trauma, Inability to flex knee to 90 degrees. ODG states regarding radiograph of knee and leg, "Recommended. In a primary care setting, if a fracture is considered, patients should have radiographs if the Ottawa criteria are met. Among the 5 decision rules for deciding when to use plain films in knee fractures, the Ottawa knee rules (injury due to trauma and age >55 years, tenderness at the head of the fibula or the patella, inability to bear weight for 4 steps, or inability to flex the knee to 90 degrees) have the strongest supporting evidence." And further clarifies indications for imaging X-rays: Acute trauma to the knee, fall or twisting injury, with one or more of following: focal tenderness, effusion, inability to bear weight. First study. Acute trauma to the knee, injury to knee >= 2 days ago, mechanism unknown. Focal patellar tenderness, effusion, able to walk. Acute trauma to the knee, significant trauma (e.g, motor vehicle accident), suspect posterior knee dislocation. Nontraumatic knee pain, child or adolescent nonpatellofemoral symptoms. Mandatory minimal initial exam. Anteroposterior (standing or supine) & Lateral (routine or cross-table). Nontraumatic knee pain, child or adult: patellofemoral (anterior) symptoms. Mandatory minimal initial exam. Anteroposterior (standing or supine), Lateral (routine or cross-table), & Axial (Merchant) view. Nontraumatic knee pain, adult: nontrauma, nontumor, nonlocalized pain. Mandatory minimal initial exam. Anteroposterior (standing or supine) & Lateral (routine or cross-table).The medical records provided did not indicate a mechanism of injury of the knee that would meet ODG criteria. Current subjective and objective corroboration to support a radiology request is necessary. The treating physician does not indicate what has changed to the patient to warrant a knee X-ray at this time. As such, the request for X-rays of the left knee is not medically necessary at this time.