

Case Number:	CM15-0045720		
Date Assigned:	03/18/2015	Date of Injury:	05/01/2011
Decision Date:	05/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/11/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/10/2015

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: 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 56-year-old female who sustained an industrial injury on 5/1/11. The injured worker reported symptoms in the left wrist and hand. The injured worker was diagnosed as having left first carpometacarpal degenerative arthritis and left first carpometacarpal arthroplasty. Treatments to date have included status post left first carpometacarpal arthroplasty on 12/16/14, physical therapy and activity modification. Currently, the injured worker complains of left wrist and hand pain. The plan of care was for physical therapy and a follow up appointment at a later date.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

8 visits of post-operative physical therapy for the left wrist/hand: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 19.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine Page(s): 98.

Decision rationale: Based on guidelines physical medicine can provide short term relief during the early phases of pain treatment and are directed at controlling symptoms such as pain, inflammation and swelling and to improve the rate of healing soft tissue injuries. They can be used sparingly with active therapies to help control swelling, pain and inflammation during the rehabilitation process. There should be documented functional improvement. There should be a home exercise program. Based on the medical records there is no documentation that the patient has had improvement with previous physical therapy or if there is a home exercise program and thus not medically necessary.