

Case Number:	CM15-0082122		
Date Assigned:	05/04/2015	Date of Injury:	10/27/2011
Decision Date:	06/02/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/20/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/28/2015

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, Indiana, New York
Certification(s)/Specialty: Internal 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 53 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 10/27/2011. The initial complaints or symptoms included gradual onset of left-sided body pain. The initial diagnoses were not mentioned in the clinical notes. Treatment to date has included conservative care, medications, conservative therapies, x-rays, MRIs, and injections. Currently, the injured worker complains of constant right (per the orthopedic consultation) hip pain with a pain rating of 7/10 and reported to be worse with prolonged standing or sitting. However, the objective findings show a normal right hip with no abnormal findings, and an abnormal left hip exam. The diagnoses include severe degenerative arthritis of the left hip, exacerbation low back pain, and obesity (BMI of 41). The request for authorization included weight loss program such as [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Weight loss program such as [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/123702-treatment>.

Decision rationale: Pursuant to Medline plus (see attached link), weight loss program (such as [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]) is not medically necessary. Treatment of obesity starts with comprehensive lifestyle management (i.e. diet, physical activity, behavioral modification) which should include the following: self-monitoring of caloric intake and physical activity; goal setting; stimulus control; nonfood rewards; and relapse prevention. See attached link for details. In this case, the injured worker's working diagnoses are severe degenerative arthritis left hip; exacerbation low back pain; and obesity. The date of injury was October 27, 2011. The injured worker's current complaints, according to a progress note dated April 8, 2015, are left hip pain increased with activity. VAS pain scale of 7/10. Patient takes analgesics (opiates), non-steroidal anti-inflammatories and muscle relaxants. The injured worker's height is 4'11", weight 200 pounds with a BMI of 40.4. There is no documentation in the medical record of lifestyle management changes or independent efforts to self monitor caloric intake alter physical activity, goal setting, stimulus control, nonfood rewards and relapse prevention. There is no discussion of the total amount of weight loss required prior to surgery (total hip replacement). There are no counseling notes documented in the medical record. There does not appear to be any comprehensive lifestyle management changes documented in medical record. Consequently, absent documentation with comprehensive lifestyle management changes and choices, weight loss program (such as [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]) is not medically necessary.