

Case Number:	CM15-0084767		
Date Assigned:	05/07/2015	Date of Injury:	01/21/2010
Decision Date:	06/08/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/22/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/04/2015

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: Maryland

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, 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 53-year-old female, with a reported date of injury of 01/20/2010. The diagnoses include left knee pain, obesity and status post left total knee replacement. Treatments to date have included a computerized tomography (CT) scan of the left knee, which showed mild to moderate patellofemoral joint effusion; total knee replacement; and x-rays of the left knee, which showed no increase in osteoarthritis. The progress report dated 03/06/2015 indicates that the injured worker stated that she continued left knee pain and was not doing well. She rated her pain 7 out of 10. The objective findings showed a limping ambulation with pain to the lumbar spine. The treating physician requested weight loss program for the left knee.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Weight Loss program, for Left Knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Exercise Page(s): 46-47.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 5 Cornerstones of Disability Prevention and Management Page(s): 83. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation NHLBI

Obesity Education Initiative Expert Panel on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Obesity in Adults (US). Bethesda (MD): National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; 1998 Sep.

Decision rationale: Weight loss program, for left knee is not medically necessary per the MTUS guidelines and the guidelines from the NHLBI. The MTUS states that to achieve functional recovery, patients must assume certain responsibilities. It is important that patients stay active or increase activity to minimize disuse, atrophy, aches, and musculoskeletal pain, and to raise endorphin levels. They must adhere to exercise and medication regimens, keep appointments, and take responsibility for their moods and emotional states. The NHLBI states that there is strong evidence that combined interventions of a low calorie diet, increased physical activity, and behavior therapy provide the most successful therapy for weight loss and weight maintenance. The documentation does not reveal that the patient has attempted sustained exercise, weight loss or diet changes independently. The request for a weight loss program is not medically necessary. To achieve functional recovery, patients must assume certain responsibilities. It is important that patients stay active or increase activity to minimize disuse, atrophy, aches, and musculoskeletal pain, and to raise endorphin levels. They must adhere to exercise and medication regimens, keep appointments, and take responsibility for their moods and emotional states. They must work within their medical restrictions, and refuse unreasonable requests by coworkers and supervisors to function over their limitations in a way that could endanger their health or safety.