

Case Number:	CM14-0140008		
Date Assigned:	09/08/2014	Date of Injury:	07/07/2014
Decision Date:	10/16/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/14/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/29/2014

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. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Family Medicine and is licensed to practice in Ohio. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 49-year-old male whose date of injury was 7/3/2014. He felt a pop in his right knee as he was coming downstairs carrying totes. His physical exam has revealed tenderness to palpation of the medial joint line, diminished flexion, a positive McMurray sign, a positive Thessaly sign. He has had six sessions of physical therapy and has been wearing a knee brace but his symptoms persist. He is clinically suspected of having an internal derangement of the knee. X-rays of the right knee were essentially nondiagnostic.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) of the right knee without the use of contrast material:
Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG): Knee and leg (updated 06/05/14), MRIs (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee. MRI. Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: ACR Appropriateness criteria- MRI (knee)

Decision rationale: Per the American College of Radiology, when initial radiographs are nondiagnostic (normal findings or a joint effusion) and knee symptoms are suspicious for an internal derangement, the next indicated study is an MRI examination. MRI is also indicated when the patient has persistent knee pain and normal radiographs. MRI is more sensitive than radiography and provides more specific information compared with radionuclide bone scan. MRI of nontraumatic knee pain may document a joint effusion, communicating popliteal cysts, proliferative changes of the synovial membrane (such as, but not limited to lipoma arborescens, synovial chondromatosis, or synovitis associated with arthritis), osteophytes, subchondral cysts, articular cartilage loss, meniscal and/or ligamentous tears and/or degeneration, extensor mechanism disorders, bone marrow edema (bearing in mind that actual edema is not a major constituent of this abnormal edema-like signal in the setting of osteoarthritis), fractures, and osteonecrosis. Per the ODG, an MRI of the knee is indicated when there is non-traumatic knee pain in a child or adolescent with symptoms not suggestive of pathology to the patella or patellar ligaments. If the initial anteroposterior and lateral x-rays are non-diagnostic (demonstrate normal findings or a joint effusion), MRI is the next study if clinically indicated. In this case, subjective and objective findings are indicative of a medial meniscal injury. There has been a reasonable trial of conservative care. Therefore, MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) of the right knee without the use of contrast material is medically necessary.