

Case Number:	CM14-0170675		
Date Assigned:	10/23/2014	Date of Injury:	04/08/2008
Decision Date:	12/09/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/15/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/15/2014

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 Occupational Medicine and is licensed to practice in California. 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 applicant is a represented [REDACTED] employee who has filed a claim for chronic knee pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of February 26, 2014. Thus far, the applicant has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; opioid therapy; transfer of care to and from various providers in various specialties; and unspecified amounts of physical therapy over the course of the claim. In a Utilization Review Report dated September 15, 2014, the claims administrator denied a proposed hyaluronic acid (viscosupplementation) injection on the grounds that the applicant did not have radiographically confirmed knee arthritis. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. In an August 20, 2014 progress note, the applicant reported ongoing complaints of knee pain. It was stated that the applicant had lost significant amounts of weight. It was stated that the applicant now weighed 170 pounds after having previously weighed 300 pounds. Intermittent popping and clicking were noted about the knee. Full knee range of motion was noted with slight limp appreciated. The applicant was given diagnosis of knee sprain and knee contusion. Hyaluronic acid injection therapy was sought. It was stated that the applicant had failed weight loss, aquatic therapy, Norco, and Cymbalta. Permanent work restrictions were renewed. It did not appear that the applicant was working with said limitations in place. The remainder of the file was surveyed. On several progress notes, referenced above, including those dated March 26, 2014, May 28, 2014, and June 25, 2014, the applicant presented with ongoing complaints of knee pain. On each occasion, however, the applicant was given diagnosis of knee sprain and knee contusion. On March 26, 2014, the applicant stated that she felt that her bone was rubbing against her bone. There was no mention of x-ray results, however. The remainder of the file was surveyed. The applicant was 58 years old as of the August 20, 2014 progress note, it was incidentally noted. There was, however, no mention of any x-ray

findings suggestive of knee arthritis. There was no mention of the applicant's ever has been given a diagnosis of knee arthritis.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

HYALURONIC ACID INJECTION TO RIGHT KNEE #1: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: ACOEM V.3 , Knee, Specific Diagnoses, Knee Pain and Osteoarthritis Viscosupplementation Injections

Decision rationale: The MTUS does not address the topic. While the Third Edition ACOEM Guidelines do acknowledge that viscosupplementation injections are indicated in the treatment of moderate-to-severe knee arthritis and have been used in the treatment of post-knee meniscectomy knee pain, in this case, however, there was no mention of the applicant's carrying a diagnosis of knee arthritis. The stated diagnosis, on each of the progress notes, referenced above, were those of knee sprain and knee contusion. The attending provider did not allude to or reference the presence of knee arthritis. There was no mention of residual knee pain complaints following earlier failed arthroscopy-meniscectomy. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.