

Case Number:	CM14-0172321		
Date Assigned:	10/23/2014	Date of Injury:	01/21/2013
Decision Date:	11/25/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/02/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/17/2014

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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management and is licensed to practice in Tennessee. 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:

This is a 55-year-old male with a 1/21/13 date of injury. The mechanism of injury occurred when his left foot hit a grease or water area, which caused him to lose his balance and fall. He landed heavily on the bent right knee. According to a progress report dated 9/9/14, the patient complained of right lateral foot pain and is using his knee sleeve. He has had cortisone injections and is using Voltaren gel. He rated his pain as a 3-4/10. Objective findings: tenderness and swelling along the knee, crepitus with full range of motion. Diagnostic impression: right knee chondromalacia, right knee contusion, early right knee degenerative arthritis. Treatment to date: medication management, activity modification, cortisone injections, physical therapy. A UR decision dated 10/2/14 denied the request for Euflexxa Injection series of 3 injections right knee. The patient was noted to have mild degenerative joint disease and did not meet the criteria for severe osteoarthritis of the knee and the injections are not recommended for chondromalacia patella, which the patient has been diagnosed with.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Euflexxa injection series of 3 injections right knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Knee & Leg Chapter, hyaluronic acid injections

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee and Leg Chapter - Viscosupplementation Peer-reviewed literature ('Efficacy of Intraarticular Hyaluronic Acid Injections in Knee Osteoarthritis')

Decision rationale: CA MTUS does not address this issue. ODG recommends viscosupplementation injections in patients with significantly symptomatic osteoarthritis that has not responded adequately to standard nonpharmacologic and pharmacologic treatments or is intolerant of these therapies; or is not a candidate for total knee replacement or has failed previous knee surgery for arthritis; or a younger patient wanting to delay total knee replacement; AND failure of conservative treatment; AND plain x-ray or arthroscopy findings diagnostic of osteoarthritis. However, in the present case, there is no documentation that the patient has a diagnosis of osteoarthritis that has not responded to standard nonpharmacologic and pharmacologic treatments. There is no documentation that he is a candidate for total knee replacement or has failed previous knee surgery for arthritis. In addition, there are no plain radiographs provided diagnostic of osteoarthritis. Therefore, the request for Euflexxa injection series of 3 injections right knee is not medically necessary.