

Case Number:	CM14-0178828		
Date Assigned:	11/03/2014	Date of Injury:	07/05/2013
Decision Date:	12/08/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/29/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/28/2014

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 Orthopedic Surgery, and is licensed to practice in Minnesota. 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 64 year old male with a history of a non-displaced fracture of the patella resulting from a fall on 7/5/2013. His anterior knee pain has persisted for over a year despite evidence of healing of the fracture on the CT scan. He has clinical evidence of patellofemoral chondromalacia with moderate crepitation. An MRI scan of 1/27/2014 revealed no evidence of osteoarthritis. Office notes from 8/13/2014 indicate continuing pain despite extensive physical therapy and medication. The disputed issues pertain to a request for Synvisc injections x 3, injection of the knee joint x 3, ultrasonic guidance, and office visits. Hyaluronic acid injections are not recommended for chondromalacia patellae, patellofemoral arthritis, or patellofemoral syndrome per ODG guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Synvisc injection left knee QTY: 3: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG, Criteria for 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) Section: Knee, Topic: Hyaluronic acid injections.

Decision rationale: The injured worker has evidence of chondromalacia patellae secondary to a non-displaced fracture of the patella which is healed with no documented malunion. There is continuing anterior knee pain and crepitation with range of motion. The remaining joint is fine per imaging studies including CT and MRI. The request is for 3 injections of Synvisc for viscosupplementation. California MTUS does not address viscosupplementation. ODG guidelines do not recommend hyaluronic acid for patellofemoral chondromalacia, patellofemoral arthritis, or patellofemoral syndrome. The request for 3 injections of Synvisc is therefore not medically necessary.

Arthrocentesis, aspiration and/or injection; major joint QTY: 3: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG, Criteria for 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) Section: Knee, Topic: Hyaluronic acid injections.

Decision rationale: The Synvisc injections are not medically necessary. Therefore, the procedure of giving the injections is also not medically necessary.

Ultrasonic guidance: 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 Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Section: Knee, Topic: Hyaluronic acid injections.

Decision rationale: The Synvisc injections are not medically necessary. Therefore the ultrasonic guidance is also not medically necessary.

Office visits for injections: 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 Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Section; Knee, Topic: Hyaluronic acid injections.

Decision rationale: The Synvisc injections are not medically necessary. The office visits are therefore also not medically necessary.