

Case Number:	CM14-0179478		
Date Assigned:	11/03/2014	Date of Injury:	05/17/1999
Decision Date:	12/24/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/16/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/29/2014

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 Internal Medicine and is licensed to practice in Maryland. 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 employee was a 65 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 05/17/1999. Her prior treatments included status post viscosupplementation Synvisc for the left knee in February 2013, August 2013, February 2014 and July 9, 2014 with excellent relief of symptoms. The visit note from 10/01/14 was reviewed. She had a history of receiving multiple Synvisc injections with her most recent one being on July 9, 2014. She stated she got approximately three to four months of relief with the Synvisc injection and she got them every five to six months, which provided her with great relief in regard to her symptoms of achiness, stiffness, pain, as well as intermittent swelling with prolonged weight bearing activities. MRI of the left knee from February 2013 revealed degenerative changes of the patellofemoral joint, moderate to severe. Pertinent exam findings included left knee well healed anterior incision and arthroscopic portals, positive patellofemoral grind and pain with deep squat. Impressions included posttraumatic patellofemoral arthritis of the left knee, history of left knee patellar fracture, status post open reduction internal fixation (ORIF) with prior history of left knee arthroscopic surgery and hardware removal. The plan of care was for next Synvisc injection to left knee.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Synvisc one injection left knee, qty: 1: 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) Knee, Hyaluronic acid injections

Decision rationale: The employee was a 65 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 05/17/1999. Her prior treatments included status post viscosupplementation Synvisc for the left knee in February 2013, August 2013, February 2014 and July 9, 2014 with excellent relief of symptoms. The visit note from 10/01/14 was reviewed. She had a history of receiving multiple Synvisc injections with her most recent one being on July 9, 2014. She stated she got approximately three to four months of relief with the Synvisc injection and she got them every five to six months, that provided her with great relief in regard to her symptoms of achiness, stiffness, pain, as well as intermittent swelling with prolonged weight-bearing activities. MRI of the left knee from February 2013 revealed degenerative changes of the patellofemoral joint, moderate to severe. Pertinent exam findings included left knee well healed anterior incision and arthroscopic portals, positive patellofemoral grind and pain with deep squat. Impressions included posttraumatic patellofemoral arthritis of the left knee, history of left knee patellar fracture, status post ORIF with prior history of left knee arthroscopic surgery and hardware removal. The plan of care was for next Synvisc injection to left knee. According to the Official Disability Guidelines, repeat series of knee injections are recommended if there is documentation of significant improvement in symptoms for six months or more with previous injections. The guidelines also don't give any guidance on the maximum established number of injections. The provided medical records indicate that she just received a Synvisc injection in July 2014. Hence a repeat injection within 6 months is not medically necessary or appropriate.