

Case Number:	CM14-0180280		
Date Assigned:	11/04/2014	Date of Injury:	01/24/1995
Decision Date:	12/09/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/21/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/30/2014

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 Practice 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 55 yr. old female claimant sustained a work injury on 1/24/95 involving the low back. She was diagnosed with lumbar radiculitis and underwent L4-S1 fusion in 2011. In 2013 she had 2 Cervical Epidural Steroid Injections (CESI) which helped her pain. She had additional CESI in June and July of 2014. A progress note on 9/10/14 indicated the claimant had trigger points in the lumbar region with 50% reduction in passive range of motion. A TENS unit was recommended by the treating physician. An additional CESI was requested in October 2014.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Cervical Epidural Steroid Injection Under Ultrasound Guidance: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 46.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 174-175.

Decision rationale: According to the ACOEM guidelines, epidural steroid injections are not recommended. Invasive techniques are of questionable merit. The treatments do not provide any long-term functional benefit or reduce the need for surgery. The claimant had 4 previous

Cervical Epidural Steroid Injections. The request for an additional Cervical Epidural Steroid Injection is not medically necessary.