

Case Number:	CM14-0184168		
Date Assigned:	11/12/2014	Date of Injury:	04/09/2013
Decision Date:	12/16/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/09/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/05/2014

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 General Preventive Medicine and is licensed to practice in Indiana. 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 employee is a 31 years old male with date of injury of 4/9/2013. A review of the medical records indicate that the patient is undergoing treatment for right thumb sprain. Subjective complaints include continued pain and numbness in the right thumb. Objective findings include restricted range of motion of the right thumb with abduction; sensation to light touch and pinprick were decreased; right hand strength 4/5; MRI of right thumb from 7/9/2013 showing a moderate grade sprain/partial thickness tearing of the ulnar collateral ligament of the thumb MCP joint. Treatment has included Tramadol/APAP. The utilization review dated 10/9/2014 non-certified MRI of the right thumb without contrast.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI of the right thumb without contrast: 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: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 268-272. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Forearm, wrist and Hand, Magnetic Resonance Imaging

Decision rationale: ACOEM states "For most patients presenting with true hand and wrist problems, special studies are not needed until after a four- to six-week period of conservative care and observation. Most patients improve quickly, provided red flag conditions are ruled out. Exceptions include the following: An acute injury to the metacarpophalangeal joint of the thumb, accompanied by tenderness on the ulnar side of the joint and laxity when that side of the joint is stressed (compared to the other side), may indicate a gamekeeper thumb or rupture of the

ligament at that location. Radiographic films may show a fracture; stress views, if obtainable, may show laxity. The diagnosis may necessitate surgical repair of the ligament; therefore, a surgical referral is warranted". ODG states for a wrist MRI "Indications for imaging -- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI): - Acute hand or wrist trauma, suspect acute distal radius fracture, radiographs normal, next procedure if immediate confirmation or exclusion of fracture is required - Acute hand or wrist trauma, suspect acute scaphoid fracture, radiographs normal, next procedure if immediate confirmation or exclusion of fracture is required - Acute hand or wrist trauma, suspect gamekeeper injury (thumb MCP ulnar collateral ligament injury) - Chronic wrist pain, plain films normal, suspect soft tissue tumor - Chronic wrist pain, plain film normal or equivocal, suspect Kienböck's disease - Repeat MRI is not routinely recommended, and should be reserved for a significant change in symptoms and/or findings suggestive of significant pathology". The treating physician has provided no evidence of red flag diagnosis and has not met the above ODG and ACOEM criteria for an MRI Of the thumb. As such, the request for MRI right thumb is not medically necessary.

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