

Case Number:	CM14-0184948		
Date Assigned:	11/12/2014	Date of Injury:	08/05/2014
Decision Date:	12/19/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/27/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/06/2014

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 Occupational Medicine, 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 applicant is a represented [REDACTED] employee who has filed a claim for shoulder pain reportedly associated with an industrial injury of August 5, 2014. Thus far, the applicant has been treated with the following: Analgesic medications; topical agents; work restrictions; unspecified amounts of physical therapy; and unspecified amounts of acupuncture. In a Utilization Review Report dated October 27, 2014, the claims administrator denied a request for shoulder MRI imaging. The applicant subsequently appealed. In a progress note dated August 8, 2014, the applicant reported ongoing complaints of shoulder pain reportedly attributed to lifting heavy cabinets during the course of her work as a housekeeper. Tenderness was appreciated about the trapezius region. Voltaren gel, Salonpas patches, work restrictions, and home exercises were endorsed. X-rays of the left shoulder of November 5, 2014 were read as normal. In a progress note seemingly dated October 14, 2014, truncated as a result of repetitive photocopying and faxing, the applicant was asked to continue Naprosyn for shoulder and neck pain. Left shoulder x-rays and MRI imaging of the shoulder and thoracic spine were sought. Medical taping was also endorsed. The applicant was asked to return to her usual and customary work. The applicant had a 12-year history of working as a housekeeper, it was noted. The requesting provider was a physiatrist. The applicant was described as having 5/5 upper extremity strength on exam. Cervical range of motion was 75% normal. The applicant was given a diagnosis of shoulder tendinitis.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) of the left shoulder: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 9 Shoulder Complaints. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Shoulder (updated 08/27/14), Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 9 Shoulder Complaints Page(s): 9-6, 214.

Decision rationale: As noted in the MTUS-adopted ACOEM Guidelines in Chapter 9, Table 9-6, page 214, the routine usage of MRI imaging for evaluation purposes without surgical indications is deemed "not recommended." Here, there was/is no evidence that the applicant was actively considering or contemplating any kind of surgical intervention involving the injured shoulder on or around the date in question. It was not clearly stated for what purpose the shoulder MRI was sought. The fact that shoulder MRI imaging was sought along with a cervical MRI imaging did imply that the attending provider was requesting the imaging studies in question for routine evaluation purposes, with no clearly formed intention of acting on the results of the same. The fact that the applicant had returned to regular duty work as a housekeeper, furthermore, suggested that the applicant was not, in fact, intent on pursuing any kind of surgical remedy involving the injured shoulder. Therefore, the request for MRI is not medically necessary.