

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0005724		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	01/26/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/19/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	03/12/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	12/30/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	01/12/2015

### 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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:

State(s) of Licensure: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Emergency Medicine

### 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 27 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 5/19/11. He has reported low back and right knee pain. The diagnoses have included (ACL) Anterior Cruciate Ligament graft mildly kinked but not torn, mild medial femoral condylar bone stress, horizontal split tear in the medial meniscus, low back pain, lumbar spine sprain/strain and lumbar spine spasm of the muscle. Treatment to date has included medications. (MRI) magnetic resonance imaging of lumbar spine dated 2.23.12 revealed posterior disc bulge without evidence of canal stenosis of neural foraminal narrowing at L2-L3; mild bilateral neural foraminal narrowing at L4-L5 and mild foraminal narrowing at L5-S1 secondary to posterior disc bulge. Currently, the IW complains of pain over the lumbar spine as well as right knee. The physical exam of 12/5/14 revealed mild tenderness to palpation over the spinous process of 4-5 and bilateral SI joints. On 12/30/14 Utilization Review non-certified a (MRI) magnetic resonance imaging of lumbar spine, noting current physical exam findings are not suggestive of a significant lumbar pathology or severe progressive neurologic deficit that would warrant (MRI) magnetic resonance imaging. The MTUS, ACOEM Guidelines, (or ODG) was cited. On 1/7/14, the injured worker submitted an application for IMR for review of (MRI) magnetic resonance imaging of lumbar spine.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**MRI of the lumbar spine:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Official Disability Guidelines, Low Back Chapter - Lumbar & Thora.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): Special Studies and Diagnostic and Therapeutic Considerations, Pages.

**Decision rationale:** The requested MRI of the lumbar spine, is not medically necessary. CA MTUS, ACOEM 2nd Edition, 2004, Chapter 12, Lower Back Complaints, Special Studies and Diagnostic and Therapeutic Considerations, Pages 303-305, recommend imaging studies of the lumbar spine with "Unequivocal objective findings that identify specific nerve compromise on the neurological examination are sufficient evidence to warrant imaging in patients who do not respond to treatment and who would consider surgery an option". The injured worker has mild tenderness to palpation over the spinous process of 4-5 and bilateral SI joints. The treating physician has not documented a positive straight leg raising test, nor deficits in dermatomal sensation, reflexes or muscle strength. The criteria noted above not having been met, MRI of the lumbar spine is not medically necessary.