

Case Number:	CM15-0016967		
Date Assigned:	02/05/2015	Date of Injury:	08/05/2011
Decision Date:	03/31/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/29/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/29/2015

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: Orthopedic Surgery

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

48 year old injured worker is a female who sustained an industrial injury on 8/5/11 involving her back and leg. She currently is experiencing tingling right buttock pain and numbness and weakness in the right posterior lower extremity. She rates her pain as 3/10 with medications and 8/10 without medications. Medications include naproxen and omeprazole. The injured worker feels that medications help her perform activities of daily living and increase overall function. Treatments mentioned were medications. Diagnoses include lumbar degenerative disc disease and radiculopathy; low back pain, muscle pain; chronic pain syndrome; lumbar discogenic pain and depression due to pain. Diagnostics include lumbar MRI 6//23/14 indicating degenerative disc disease and tear in the posterior annulus of the disc at L5-S1. Progress note dated 12/22/14 indicates surgery is pending authorization. On 12/27/14 Utilization Review non-certified the request for pre-operative labs and electrocardiogram citing Evidence-Based Citation (EBM): Low Back Complaints adopted from ACOEM: Chapter 12.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Pre-operative labs and EKG: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation National Guidelines Clearinghouse Website (http://guideline.gov/summary/summary.aspx?doc_id=12973&nbr=006682)

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Low Back, Preoperative testing

Decision rationale: CA MTUS/ACOEM is silent on the issue of preoperative clearance and testing. ODG, Low back, Preoperative testing general, is utilized. This chapter states that preoperative testing is guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. ODG states, These investigations can be helpful to stratify risk, direct anesthetic choices, and guide postoperative management, but often are obtained because of protocol rather than medical necessity. The decision to order preoperative tests should be guided by the patient's clinical history, comorbidities and physical examination findings. Patients with signs or symptoms of active cardiovascular disease should be evaluated with appropriate testing, regardless of their preoperative status. Electrocardiography is recommended for patients undergoing high risk surgery and those undergoing intermediate risk surgery who have additional risk factors. Patients undergoing low risk surgery do not require electrocardiography. Based on the information provided for review, there is no indication of any of these clinical scenarios present in this case. In this case the patient is a healthy 48 year old without comorbidities or physical examination findings concerning to warrant preoperative labs and EKG prior to the proposed surgical procedure. Therefore the determination is for non-certification.