

Case Number:	CM15-0119549		
Date Assigned:	06/30/2015	Date of Injury:	01/13/2004
Decision Date:	07/29/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/21/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/22/2015

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: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation

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 is a 49 year old female with a January 13, 2004 date of injury. A progress note dated May 12, 2015 documents subjective complaints (symptoms of the bilateral knees; symptoms of the cervical spine; new onset of symptoms of the bilateral elbows), objective findings (bilateral knee patellofemoral crepitus and joint line tenderness; cervical spine tenderness and spasm of the paracervical muscles; limited range of motion of the cervical spine; tenderness to palpation over the left lateral epicondyle), and current diagnoses (rotator cuff syndrome; cervical spine sprain/strain). Treatments to date have included Synvisc injection of the knee that improved the symptoms. The treating physician documented a plan of care that included Synvisc injections for the left knee.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 Synvisc Injection for the left knee: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG, Knee, Hyaluronic Acid Injections, pages 311-313.

Decision rationale: There is no recent x-ray findings reported. Current symptoms and objective findings are noted in the patella with patellofemoral crepitus. Published clinical trials comparing injections of visco-supplements with placebo have yielded inconsistent results. ODG states that higher quality and larger trials have generally found lower levels of clinical improvement in pain and function than small and poor quality trials which they conclude that any clinical improvement attributable to visco-supplementation is likely small and not clinically meaningful. They also conclude that evidence is insufficient to demonstrate clinical benefit for the higher molecular weight products. Guidelines recommends Hyaluronic acid injections as an option for osteoarthritis; however, while osteoarthritis of the knee is a recommended indication, there is insufficient evidence for other conditions, including patellofemoral arthritis, chondromalacia patellae, osteochondritis dissecans, or patellofemoral syndrome (patellar knee pain). Submitted reports have not demonstrated clear supportive findings for the injection request nor identified functional improvement of at least 6 months from prior injections rendered in terms of decreased pharmacological profile, treatment utilization, or increased ADLs. The 1 Synvisc Injection for the left knee is not medically necessary and appropriate.