

Case Number:	CM15-0125915		
Date Assigned:	07/10/2015	Date of Injury:	05/07/2014
Decision Date:	08/06/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/30/2015

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: New Jersey, Alabama, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular 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 51-year-old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 5/7/14. She reported injury after a table smashed her feet and ankles between two tables. The injured worker was diagnosed as having bilateral ankle sprain, bilateral Achilles tendinitis, bilateral calf strain and bilateral plantar fasciitis. Treatment to date has included chiropractic treatments, physical therapy and bilateral foot x-rays with normal results. As of the PR2 dated 6/11/15, the injured worker reports pain in the bilateral ankles. She rates her pain a 6-7/10 in the left ankle and an 8/10 in the right ankle. Objective findings include restricted range of motion in both ankles due to pain and 3+ tenderness to palpation of the Achilles' tendon. The treating physician requested podiatrist referral (bilateral ankles).

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Podiatrist Referral (Bilateral Ankles): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Page(s): 92.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Assessing Red Flags and Indication for Immediate Referral Chronic pain programs, early intervention Page(s): 171, 32-33.

Decision rationale: According to MTUS guidelines, the presence of red flags may indicate the need for specialty consultation. In addition, the requesting physician should provide a documentation supporting the medical necessity for a pain management evaluation with a specialist. The documentation should include the reasons, the specific goals and end point for using the expertise of a specialist. In the chronic pain programs, early intervention section of MTUS guidelines stated: "Recommendations for identification of patients that may benefit from early intervention via a multidisciplinary approach: (a) The patient's response to treatment falls outside of the established norms for their specific diagnosis without a physical explanation to explain symptom severity. (b) The patient exhibits excessive pain behavior and/or complaints compared to that expected from the diagnosis. (c) There is a previous medical history of delayed recovery. (d) The patient is not a candidate where surgery or other treatments would clearly be warranted. (e) Inadequate employer support. (f) Loss of employment for greater than 4 weeks. The most discernible indication of at risk status is lost time from work of 4 to 6 weeks. (Mayer 2003)" The patient was recently approved for acupuncture therapy that could improve the patient pain and limit the need for a referral to a specialist. In addition, there is no documentation of red flags indicating the need for a podiatrist consultation. Therefore, the request for Podiatrist Referral (Bilateral Ankles) is not medically necessary at this time.