

Case Number:	CM15-0039489		
Date Assigned:	03/10/2015	Date of Injury:	09/06/2013
Decision Date:	05/18/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/12/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/03/2015

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: Massachusetts

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pain Management

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 46 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 9/6/2013. Her diagnoses, and/or impressions, included: left foot surgery (10/29/14) with complications; left foot/ joint/ankle pain; left foot 5th metatarsal base fracture, treated surgically with hardware and hardware removal, and with deformity; and left 3rd web space Morton's Neuroma - treated. No current magnetic resonance imaging studies are noted. A computed tomography scan was stated to have been done on 11/16/2014. Her treatments have included left foot surgery, with complications, followed by 36 sessions of physical therapy, and > 20 alcohol/cortisone injections to the bottom of the left foot (neuroma), since 3/3/2014 - which provide immediate but short-term relief (given on 1/22/2015). Progress notes of 1/22/2015 reported a follow-up appointment with complaints of swelling and edema along the neuroma, overall doing well with sclerosing therapy injection, with being about 75% better, but with occasional flare-up of the neuroma at work, activity dependent. The physician's requests for treatments were noted to include the placement of an ankle brace, following that injection, to stabilize the foot/ankle, and stating that she would benefit from custom made AFO Richie braces, as well as orthopedic shoes for further ankle/foot support. Recent, 2/11/2015 progress report notes the return of excruciating pain when the injections wear off, causing constant pain and resulting in decreased activities and sleep. It is noted she continues to work a full-time day, performing unrestricted, Administrative duties.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

DME Purchase: Orthopedic shoes x 2, Richie Brace x 2, and Molded foot plate x 2: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Orthotics.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) (1) Ankle & Foot (Acute & Chronic), Orthotic devices, (2) Ankle & Foot (Acute & Chronic), Morton's neuroma treatment.

Decision rationale: The claimant is nearly 2 years status post work-related injury and continues to be treated for left foot pain. She underwent surgery for a 5th metatarsal fracture and is now being treatment for pain due to a Morton's neuroma. In terms of treatments for this condition, guidelines recommend alcohol injections and surgery as options after conservative care. Bilateral foot orthotics/orthoses are not recommended to treat unilateral ankle / foot problems. Therefore, the requested bilateral custom orthopedic shoes are not medically necessary.