

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0065117		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	04/13/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	10/28/2010
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/11/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	03/16/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/06/2015

### 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, 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 68 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 10/28/2010. He reported twisting and falling onto his left knee; he had pain in his low back and left knee. Diagnoses have included degenerative joint disease of left knee. Treatment to date has included a hyaluronic acid injection to the left knee and medication. According to the progress report dated 2/24/2015, the injured worker complained of left knee pain. Objective findings revealed moderate crepitation of the left knee. Authorization was requested for a Gel-One injection to the left knee. A report indicates that x-rays of the left knee showed moderately severe degenerative changes affecting the medial compartment. Synvisc injections were certified in June 2013. The note states that the injection provided "benefit." It appears to have lasted approximately 3 months.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

#### **1 Gel-One Injection to the left knee: 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), Knee & Leg (Acute & Chronic), Hyaluronic acid injections.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Knee Chapter, Hyaluronic acid injections.

**Decision rationale:** Regarding the request for repeat hyaluronic acid injection in the knee, California MTUS does not address the issue. ODG supports hyaluronic acid injections for patients with significantly symptomatic osteoarthritis who have not responded adequately to nonpharmacologic (e.g., exercise) and pharmacologic treatments or are intolerant of these therapies, with documented severe osteoarthritis of the knee, pain that interferes with functional activities (e.g., ambulation, prolonged standing) and not attributed to other forms of joint disease, and who have failed to adequately respond to aspiration and injection of intra-articular steroids. Guidelines go on to state that the injections are generally performed without fluoroscopic or ultrasound guidance. ODG states that if there is significant improvement in symptoms for 6 months or more, and symptoms recur, it may be reasonable to do another series. Within the documentation available for review, there is documentation of previous hyaluronic acid injections. However, there is no documentation of significant improvement in symptoms and function for 6 months or more after the previous injections. In the absence of such documentation, the currently requested repeat Gel-One injection is not medically necessary.