

Case Number:	CM15-0072499		
Date Assigned:	04/22/2015	Date of Injury:	03/08/1996
Decision Date:	05/22/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/25/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/15/2015

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: Chiropractor, Oriental 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 49 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on March 8, 1996. He has reported back pain. Diagnoses have included thoracic or lumbosacral neuritis or radiculitis, lumbar spine intervertebral disc disorder, and lumbar spine stenosis. Treatment to date has included medications, physical therapy, epidural steroid injection, imaging studies, and diagnostic testing. A progress note dated March 10, 2015 indicates a chief complaint of back pain. The treating physician documented a plan of care that included acupuncture treatment.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

24 acupuncture sessions for the lumbar spine: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM, Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Acupuncture Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: Patient has not had prior Acupuncture treatment. Provider requested initial trial of 24 acupuncture sessions for lumbar spine which were modified to 6 by the utilization

review. Per guidelines 3-6 treatments are supported for initial course of Acupuncture with evidence of functional improvement prior to consideration of additional care. Requested visits exceed the quantity of initial acupuncture visits supported by the cited guidelines. Additional visits may be rendered if the patient has documented objective functional improvement. MTUS-Definition 9792.20 (f) Functional improvement means either a clinically significant improvement in activities of daily living or a reduction in work restrictions as measured during the history and physical exam. Per guidelines and review of evidence, 24 Acupuncture visits are not medically necessary.