

Case Number:	CM15-0076384		
Date Assigned:	04/28/2015	Date of Injury:	04/06/2009
Decision Date:	07/07/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/24/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/21/2015

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: Texas, Florida, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational 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 70-year-old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 4/6/2009. He reported injury from crawling under a house. The injured worker was diagnosed as having cervical sprain/strain, cervical radiculitis, right shoulder tendinitis, bilateral knee patello-femoral syndrome and rule out internal derangement of the right shoulder and bilateral knees. There is no record of a recent diagnostic study. Treatment to date has included injections, physical therapy, and chiropractic care and medication management. In a progress note dated 2/2/2015, the injured worker complains of neck pain that radiates to the right upper extremity rated 5-7/10, right shoulder pain rated 5-7/10 and bilateral knee pain rated 5-7/10. Physical examination showed cervical tenderness, right shoulder tenderness and bilateral knee tenderness. The treating physician is requesting cervical magnetic resonance imaging without contrast.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) of Cervical Spine without contrast: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), Cervical Spine.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints, Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), 2nd Edition, (2004) ACOEM, Page 303, Low Back, regarding imaging.

Decision rationale: This claimant was injured now six years ago with a cervical strain. There is no mention of a recent diagnostic study. There is cervical tenderness, right shoulder tenderness. Although there is subjective information presented in regarding increasing pain, there are no accompanying physical signs. The case would therefore not meet the MTUS-ACOEM criteria for cervical, magnetic imaging, due to the lack of objective, unequivocal neurologic physical examination findings documenting either a new radiculopathy, or a significant change in a previously documented radiculopathy. The guide's state: Unequivocal objective findings that identify specific nerve compromise on the neurologic examination are sufficient evidence to warrant imaging in patients who do not respond to treatment and who would consider surgery an option. When the neurologic examination is less clear, however, further physiologic evidence of nerve dysfunction should be obtained before ordering an imaging study. Indiscriminate imaging will result in false positive findings, such as disk bulges, that are not the source of painful symptoms and do not warrant surgery. The request is appropriately not medically necessary.