

Case Number:	CM15-0091197		
Date Assigned:	05/15/2015	Date of Injury:	02/13/2015
Decision Date:	06/16/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/24/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/12/2015

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 29 year old male patient who sustained an industrial injury on 02/13/2015. The accident was described as the patient having climbed off from a trailer to land on a ratchet strap twisting his ankle. A radiography scan of the left tibia fibula revealed a negative examination with no fractures or abnormalities found. The treating diagnosis is left ankle swelling, and strain/sprain. He is using a walking boot. The expected maximum medical improvement date is 03/16/2015. A primary treating office visit dated 04/17/2015 reported the patient with subjective complaint of persistent pain in the left ankle. The pain is described as dull aching to sharp pain that he rated 5 out of 10 in intensity. He continues taking Naprosyn and has not yet started physical therapy sessions. Objective findings showed less focal tenderness in the region of the deltoid ligament, as well as the posterior/anterior tibial insertion sites. There remains focal tenderness along the posterior lateral aspect of the ankle in the region of the peroneal tendons.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Work conditioning, 2 times per wk for 3 wks, 6 sessions: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Work conditioning, work hardening Page(s): 125. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Physical Medicine Guidelines: Work conditioning.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Work conditioning, work hardening, p125.

Decision rationale: The claimant sustained in work injury in February 2015 with a left ankle sprain/strain. When seen, pain was rated at 4/10. He had completed a second course of physical therapy and had improved. When seen, he was wearing work boots and an ankle support. He was continuing at restricted work. Authorization for additional physical therapy for work conditioning two times per week for three weeks was requested. I will with Work restrictions were continued with a 25 pound materials handling restriction. The purpose of work conditioning / hardening is to prepare a worker who has functional limitations that preclude the ability to return to work at a medium or higher demand level. Participation is expected for a minimum of 4 hours a day for three to five days a week. In this case, the claimant is already working a full schedule. Removing him from work for work conditioning is not appropriate. The requested sessions two times per week for three weeks would not be an effective means of conditioning and is not medically necessary. What is needed is a continued home exercise program with reassessment and, when at maximum medical improvement, a functional capacity evaluation if needed.