

Case Number:	CM15-0095210		
Date Assigned:	05/21/2015	Date of Injury:	10/24/2011
Decision Date:	06/24/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/07/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/18/2015

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: 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 40 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 10/24/2011. Diagnoses included chondromalacia patella and she is now status post patellofemoral arthroplasty. Co-morbid conditions includes obesity (BMI 30). Treatment to date has included diagnostics, surgical intervention, physical therapy and medications. Per the Secondary Treating Physician's Progress Report dated 4/27/2015, the injured worker noted that she has started post surgical physical therapy. She has been on an exercise bicycle and they are working on stretching. Physical examination revealed full extension and flexion to 110-15. Her strength testing with resistance to quads, hamstrings and gastrocs all in the 3/5 range. X-rays revealed excellent alignment of the prosthesis. The plan of care included durable medical equipment (Neurotech knee hab with electrodes and batteries).

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

DME: Neurotech knee hab rental: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 48, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Post-Surgical treatment guidelines of the knee; Neuromuscular electrical stimulation (NMES devices) Page(s): Part 1 pg 25; Part 2 pg 121.

Decision rationale: Neuromuscular electrical stimulation (NMES devices) are devices which use electric current produced by a device placed on the skin to prevent or retard disuse muscle atrophy, relax muscle spasms, increase blood circulation, maintain or increase range-of-motion, re-educate muscles, and to stimulate quadriceps muscles following major knee surgeries to maintain and enhance strength during rehabilitation. It is most commonly used in a supervised physical therapy program for muscle rehabilitation and as part of a comprehensive physical therapy program. The MTUS does not recommend its use for treatment of chronic pain. The MTUS describes the post surgical rehabilitation treatment period for chondromalacia to be a 4 month program. The patient is well within this time period and use of this device is appropriate in the present clinical setting to enhance the patient's muscle strength. Therefore, this device is medically necessary.

DME: Electrodes x 2 for purchase: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 48, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Post-Surgical treatment guidelines of the knee; Neuromuscular electrical stimulation (NMES devices) Page(s): Part 1 pg 25; Part 2 pg 121.

Decision rationale: Neuromuscular electrical stimulation (NMES devices) are devices which use electric current produced by a device placed on the skin to prevent or retard disuse muscle atrophy, relax muscle spasms, increase blood circulation, maintain or increase range-of-motion, re-educate muscles, and to stimulate quadriceps muscles following major knee surgeries to maintain and enhance strength during rehabilitation. It is most commonly used in a supervised physical therapy program for muscle rehabilitation and as part of a comprehensive physical therapy program. The MTUS does not recommend its use for treatment of chronic pain. The MTUS describes the post-surgical rehabilitation treatment period for chondromalacia to be a 4 month program. The patient is well within this post-surgical time period and use of this device is appropriate in the present clinical setting to enhance the patient's muscle strength. Use of supporting durable medical equipment (electrodes) in the use of a NMES device is medically necessary.