

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to a physician reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The physician reviewer is Board Certified in Orthopedic Surgery and is licensed to practice in California, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. 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 physician 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/services.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

The following relevant documents received from the interested parties and the documents provided with the application were reviewed and considered. These documents included:

- Application of Independent Medical Review
- Utilization Review Determination
- Medical Records from Claims Administrator
- Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule (MTUS)

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The physician reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

The claimant is a 49-year-old female who was injured in a work related accident on October 26, 2010 where she fell while walking outside “dislocating” her right knee. She was initially treated with meniscectomy chondroplasty and anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) reconstruction of the right knee in June of 2011. Recent imaging to the knee includes a June 21, 2013 MRI report demonstrating postsurgical changes noted to the reconstructed ACL, chondromalacia most noted in the medial compartment, less so in the patellar and lateral compartments. Evidence of prior subtotal medial meniscectomy and a grade III lateral meniscal tear was noted. Given ongoing pain complaints, surgical intervention was recommended in August of 2013 in the form of revision arthroscopy, ACL revision reconstruction and repair/excision of tissues as needed for the right knee. Meniscal transplantation was also noted to be requested. This request was denied by utilization review on August 7, 2013 citing the claimant’s underlying arthrosis, age and previous treatment course as incompatible with meniscal transplantation. The request was modified to approve a surgical arthroscopy to the knee ACL revision reconstruction, medial meniscal procedure not to include transplantation. There is a request for outpatient medial meniscal transplantation with possible cartilage grafting to the right knee at present.

IMR DECISION(S) AND RATIONALE(S)

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

1. Outpatient medial meniscus transplantation, possible cartilage paste grafting to the right knee is not medically necessary and appropriate.

The Claims Administrator based its decision on the Official Disability Guidelines, Chapter Knee/Leg, Web Edition, which is not part of the MTUS.

The Expert Reviewer found that no section of the MTUS was applicable. Per the Strength of Evidence hierarchy established by the California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Workers' Compensation, the Expert Reviewer based his/her decision on the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Treatment in Workers' Comp, 18th Edition, 2013 Updates: knee procedure, which is not part of the MTUS.

The Physician Reviewer's decision rationale:

The guidelines do not support surgical consideration for meniscal transplantation based upon the submitted medical records. Per the guidelines, surgical considerations for meniscal transplantation would include need for stable knee ligaments, normal alignment and normal joint space with an ideal age of 20 to 45 years old. The medical records indicate the employee is to undergo a revision ACL reconstruction demonstrating ligamentous instability with valgus alignment to the knee and advanced degenerative arthrosis to the medial compartment. When taking the above into consideration with the employee's age of 49 years, the clinical criteria for the requested services are not met. **The requested outpatient medial meniscus transplantation, possible cartilage paste grafting to the right knee is not medically necessary and appropriate.**

/srb

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