

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0107707		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/12/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/26/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/19/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/20/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/04/2015

### 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: Orthopedic Surgery, Hand Surgery, Sports 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 21 year old male who sustained an industrial injury on 11-26-2013. Current diagnoses include status post right index finger distal interphalangeal joint arthrodesis using cone and cup technique with internal fixation with Kirschner wires 12-15-2015, and status post pin removal 04-13-2015. Report dated 04-20-2015 noted that the injured worker presented for a post operative follow from surgery on 04-13-2015. It was noted that the injured worker has no pain in the right index finger. Physical examination revealed evidence of a flexible mallet deformity with 70% DIP joint flexion contracture of the right index finger, and able to make a full fist with the right hand. Previous treatments included medications, right index finger surgery on 12-15-2014, acupuncture, physical therapy, and right index finger pin removal on 04-13-2015. The treatment plan included follow up in 4-6 weeks, continue prescriptions for tramadol, and request for post-op occupational therapy for the right index finger 2-3 times per week for 6 weeks. The utilization review dated 05-20-2015, modified the request for post-op occupational therapy 2 times per week for 6 weeks for the right index finger.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Post operative Occupational Therapy, 2-3 times wkly for 6 wks (18 sessions), Right Index Finger:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints 2004, and Postsurgical Treatment 2009.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Postsurgical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Forearm, Wrist, & Hand. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Green's Operative Hand Surgery, 6th ed., Chapter 12, Arthrodesis and Arthroplasty of Small Joints of the Hand.

**Decision rationale:** This is a request for 12 therapy sessions following December 15, 2014 right index finger distal interphalangeal joint arthrodesis and subsequent April 13, 2015 removal of pins from the surgical site. There is no scientific evidence of benefit of therapy following distal interphalangeal joint arthrodesis and as a consequence therapy in this clinical setting is not included in any evidence based guidelines. The California MTUS guidelines do not include any therapy recommendations following arthrodesis of the forearm, wrist and hand. There is greater detail of routine recommended treatment following such surgery in the specialty text referenced which also fails to recommend therapy. It has been 10 months since the arthrodesis surgery and 6 months since the pin removal procedure and there is no reasonable expectation the proposed therapy would result in functional improvement. The request is not medically necessary.