

Notice of Independent Review Decision

DATE OF REVIEW: 7/17/2008
IRO CASE #:

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE OR SERVICES IN DISPUTE:

Left finger ligamentous reconstruction tendon interposition (26055)

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE REVIEWER:

This reviewer graduated from University of Texas and completed training in Orthopaedics at University of Michigan. A physicians credentialing verification organization verified the state licenses, board certification and OIG records. This reviewer successfully completed Medical Reviews training by an independent medical review organization. This reviewer has been practicing Orthopaedics since 1985.

REVIEW OUTCOME:

Upon independent review the reviewer finds that the previous adverse determination/adverse determinations should be:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Upheld | (Agree) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overturned | (Disagree) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Overturned | (Agree in part/Disagree in part) |

Left finger ligamentous reconstruction tendon interposition (26055) Upheld

INJURED EMPLOYEE CLINICAL HISTORY [SUMMARY]:

This xx year old female works in which requires her to use her hands for repetitive tasks. She developed pain at the base of the thumb, primarily the lower aspect to the level of the CMC joint. She also has shooting pains that shoot up the radial aspect of the thumb along the metacarpal and proximal phalanx level of the thumb. Her diagnosis was listed as left CMC thumb arthritis. There was no history of any specific trauma. The injured worker was noted to be taking over the counter anti-inflammatories and wearing a splint. At this time, the request for left finger ligamentous reconstruction tendon interposition is under review for medical necessity.

ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE DECISION INCLUDE CLINICAL BASIS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS USED TO SUPPORT THE DECISION.

The denial rendered in this case is appropriate in that there is no documentation that an injection was tried. The x-ray report did not indicate a severely degenerated or unstable joint, that might have otherwise justified deviating from the normal procedure of a trial of steroid injections. A stage 2 arthritic basilar joint (Eaton Classification) should have a formal trial of non-operative measures prior to making the decision for surgery. This injured worker is documented as stage 2 (no subluxation and only minor joint space narrowing). The request is not medically necessary and thus the previous denial is upheld.

A DESCRIPTION AND THE SOURCE OF THE SCREENING CRITERIA OR OTHER CLINICAL BASIS USED TO MAKE THE DECISION:

- ACOEM- AMERICAN COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL & ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE UM KNOWLEDGEBASE
- AHCPR- AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH & QUALITY GUIDELINES
- DWC- DIVISION OF WORKERS COMPENSATION POLICIES OR GUIDELINES
- EUROPEAN GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC LOW BACK PAIN
- INTERQUAL CRITERIA
- MEDICAL JUDGEMENT, CLINICAL EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ACCEPTED MEDICAL STANDARDS
- MERCY CENTER CONSENSUS CONFERENCE GUIDELINES
- MILLIMAN CARE GUIDELINES
- ODG- OFFICIAL DISABILITY GUIDELINES & TREATMENT GUIDELINES
- PRESSLEY REED, THE MEDICAL DISABILITY ADVISOR
- TEXAS GUIDELINES FOR CHIROPRACTIC QUALITY ASSURANCE & PRACTICE PARAMETERS

TEXAS TACADA GUIDELINES
TMF SCREENING CRITERIA MANUAL

- X** PEER REVIEWED NATIONALLY ACCEPTED MEDICAL LITERATURE (PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)
OTHER EVIDENCE BASED, SCIENTIFICALLY VALID, OUTCOME FOCUSED GUIDELINES (PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION)

1. James Strickland, MD, *The Hand*, 1998, p. 448 "Frequently, the patient with very early involvement will obtain significant relief by taking an initial course of NSAIDs and a supportive thumb spica splint....these patients frequently become symptom free and may go several years before requiring surgical intervention".

2. Mark Miller, MD, *Review of Orthopedics*, 2000, p.334 "Non-operative measures including NSAIDs, splints, and steroid injections [for basilar joint arthritis]. Failing a trial of non-operative treatment, operative options [are then considered].