

July 11, 2006

VIA FACSIMILE
Jacob Rosenstein, MD
Attention: Jennifer Negri

VIA FACSIMILE
American Insurance Company
Attention: Katie Foster

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

RE: MDR Tracking #: M2-06-1552-01
DWC #:
Injured Employee: ____
Requestor: Jacob Rosenstein, MD
Respondent: American Insurance Company
MAXIMUS Case #: TW06-0102

MAXIMUS has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). The MAXIMUS IRO Certificate Number is 5348. The TDI, Division of Workers Compensation (DWC) has assigned this case to MAXIMUS in accordance with Rule §133.308, which allows for a dispute resolution by an IRO.

MAXIMUS has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine whether or not the adverse determination was appropriate. Relevant medical records, documentation provided by the parties referenced above and other documentation and written information submitted regarding this appeal was reviewed during the performance of this independent review.

This case was reviewed by a practicing physician who is board certified in neurosurgery on the MAXIMUS external review panel who is familiar with the condition and treatment options at issue in this appeal. The reviewer has met the requirements for the approved doctor list (ADL) of DWC or has been approved as an exception to the ADL requirement. A certification was signed that the reviewing provider has no known conflicts of interest between that provider and the injured employee, the injured employee's employer, the injured employee's insurance carrier, the utilization review agent, or any of the treating doctors or insurance carrier health care providers who reviewed the case for decision before referral to the IRO, was signed. In addition, the MAXIMUS physician reviewer certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party in this case.

Clinical History

This case concerns an adult male who had a work related injury on _____. Details regarding the work related injury were not provided in the enclosed records. Diagnoses included status post L4-5 decompression and fusion (1997), status post L3-4 decompression laminectomy (2002), recurrent lumbar radiculopathy, lumbar trigger points, and lumbar facet syndrome. Evaluation and treatment has included facet injections and Medrol Dosepak.

Requested Services

Lumbar facet injections at L2-3, L3-4 and L5-S1.

Documents and/or information used by the reviewer to reach a decision:

Documents Submitted by Requestor:

1. Records and correspondence from Jacob Rosenstein, MD – 5/3/06, 5/15/06

Documents Submitted by Respondent:

1. Carrier's Position Statement – 6/16/06
2. Determination Notice – 5/12/06, 5/22/06

Decision

The Carrier's denial of authorization for the requested services is upheld.

Standard of Review

This MAXIMUS determination is based upon generally accepted standard and medical literature regarding the condition and services/supplies in the appeal.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

The MAXIMUS physician consultant indicated that there is no clear indication or established clinical benefit to the performance of therapeutic facet injections. The MAXIMUS physician consultant also noted that repeated studies have failed to demonstrate appreciable benefit for these procedures except as a diagnostic modality. The MAXIMUS physician consultant indicated the requested procedure remains unproven and therefore is not the standard of care for treatment of this patient's condition.

Therefore, the MAXIMUS physician consultant concluded that the requested preauthorization for lumbar facet injections at L2-3, L3-4 and L5-S1 are not medically necessary for treatment of the patient's condition. (Bani A, et al. Indications for and benefits of lumbar facet joint block: analysis of 230 consecutive patients. Neurosurg Focus. 2002 Aug 15;13(2):E11.)

Your Right To Appeal

If you are unhappy with all or part of this decision, you have the right to appeal the decision. The decision of the Independent Review Organization is binding during the appeal process.

If you are disputing the decision (other than a spinal surgery prospective decision), the appeal must be made directly to a district court in Travis County (see Texas Labor Code §413.031). An appeal to District Court must be filed not later than 30 days after the date on which the decision that is the subject of the appeal is final and appealable. If you are disputing a spinal surgery prospective decision, a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the Division of Workers' Compensation, Chief Clerk of Proceedings, within ten (10) days of your receipt of this decision.

Sincerely,
MAXIMUS

Lisa Gebbie, MS, RN
State Appeals Department

cc: Division of Workers Compensation

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I hereby verify that a copy of this Independent Review Organization (IRO) Decision was sent to the carrier, the requestor and claimant via facsimile or U.S. Postal Service from the office of the IRO on this 11th day of July 2006.

Signature of IRO Employee: _____
External Appeals Department