



# Benefits of Independent Medical Evaluations

Issues	Type of IME	Benefits
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Was the original diagnosis correct on the First Report of Injury?	Allowed Conditions Work Related	An IME will determine the accuracy of the diagnosis on the FROI if questionable. Also, determine whether the injury was actually work related.
Should claimed conditions be allowed?	Allowed Conditions Work Related	Determine whether the injury was work related, or whether the mechanism of the injury caused the alleged conditions.
Should additional conditions be allowed?	Allowed Conditions Work Related	An IME will reveal whether new conditions are actually related to the injury, or are congenital, pre-existing, or degenerative conditions, or are unsubstantiated.
Are conditions directly and causally related to the identified injury?	Allowed Conditions Causality	IMEs examine the mechanism of the injury and how it happened to determine whether the claimant's condition could result from the injury.
Are any conditions (allowed or claimed) caused by non-work related pre-existing medical conditions?	Allowed Conditions Causality Work Related	Many claimed conditions are degenerative disease, or may be caused by a non-work related activity or event. An IME will determine or question the direct causality of the claimed condition.
Are the present complaints a direct continuation of a previous injury or condition?	Allowed Conditions Causality Work Related	Determine if these conditions (allowed or claimed) are the result of a previous injury (especially if not work related) or other, possibly chronic, health problems. Especially helpful for repetitive motion claims.
Are the injured worker's subjective complaints compatible with objective findings?	Allowed Conditions	An independent exam will evaluate exaggerated symptoms that might be accepted or confirmed by the claimant's physician, but are not evident to an objective, independent physician.

What would be the recommended treatment plan for the allowed conditions?	Maximum Medical Improvement	An IME will examine, analyze, and consider whether maximum medical improvement is reached and/or whether further treatment is justified. If so, an IME physician can recommend treatment to resolve the medical condition.
Is the current or requested course of treatment appropriate for the allowed conditions?	Maximum Medical Improvement Recommended Treatment Work Related	In addition to an opinion on whether any medical improvement is expected, IMEs provide an objective evaluation of a treatment program to consider its effectiveness and likely results.
Has the past course of treatment been effective and/or appropriate?	Maximum Medical Improvement Recommended Treatment	An IME will determine a treatment's past effectiveness and whether it has been helpful to the patient reaching maximum medical improvement.
Are the prescribed medications/therapy/treatments appropriate?	Recommended Treatment	If the condition exists, and is the result of the claimed work injury, an IME can serve as an objective opinion useful to allow or deny the treatment.
Is surgery/rehabilitation/therapy/manipulation recommended for these conditions?	Recommended Treatment	An IME will help reveal what therapies or treatments, if any, will be beneficial to the patient and will help achieve maximum medical improvement or resolution of the condition.

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Will there be any improvement or positive change in the injured worker's condition?	Maximum Medical Improvement	The IME will assist the claims manager to plan next steps in the case by determining if the conditions will improve or change, if treatment can help, or if the claim should be expedited.
Will further treatment benefit the injured worker?	Maximum Medical Improvement Recommended Treatment	An IME can help decide whether, or what, further treatment is advisable, and whether MMI has been reached, thus answering further treatment questions.
Has the injured worker reached a plateau in treatment?	Maximum Medical Improvement	A timely IME can determine if further treatment will be beneficial or mostly ineffective in resolving the medical conditions.
Has the worker reached Maximum Medical Improvement?	Maximum Medical Improvement	With a determination from the IME physician that MMI is reached, the claim can be addressed with different objectives and goals

Has this claim gone on too long?	Maximum Medical Improvement Recommended Treatment	Timely attention to long-standing cases can help avoid the serious financial impact facing an employer. An IME is often essential to enable resolution of the case.
The time, expense, delays, and treatments of this claim are excessive.	Maximum Medical Improvement Recommended Treatment	A simple file review by an IME doctor can help evaluate and consider recommended case action. Sometimes continued treatment is best, but should be confirmed.
Should the worker be able to return to work at this time?	Maximum Medical Improvement Job Task Relationship	Treatment and therapeutic plans can discourage return to work even if the employee is capable. An IME will look at the case objectively to recommend RTW steps.
What keeps the injured worker from returning to full work duty?	Maximum Medical Improvement Job Task Relationship	Often, the perspective of the treating professionals considers only 100% recovery as acceptable, when the injured worker can perform other duties.
Can the employee return to work at full duty or modified duty at this time?	Maximum Medical Improvement Job Task Relationship	An experienced IME physician will consider both the physical capabilities of the employee AND specific job tasks required to develop a satisfactory RTW plan.
Would there be any medically necessary work restrictions?	Job Task Relationship Return to Work	An objective IME allows the employer and the employee to address any work restrictions together.

Should we contest the disability claims or findings of the case?	Allowed Conditions Causality & Work Related	The employer should be confident that the claim and the disability are justified and should be accepted. IME opinions can often help build a stronger case for the employer.
Does the claimant have a permanent or temporary disability?	Extent of Disability Causality & Work Related	An IME will provide medical evidence regarding the claim, showing whether a disability exists and, if so, whether it is the result of a work related injury or illness.
What is the extent or percentage rating of the disability?	Extent of Disability Causality & Work Related	Any impairment rating or determination should be considered uncertain until evaluated by an objective, experienced IME physician.
Does the temporary disability still exist?	Extent of Disability Causality & Work Related	Return to work issues, and any continuing disability should be addressed by independent physicians who will closely consider case resolution if advisable.

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