

Working Your Way Through Head Injury

It's not that I m so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer.
Albert Einstein

The following is meant to serve as a summary of the *AMA Guides to Evaluation of Permanent Impairment, 5th Edition*, (the *Guides*) process of evaluation for those specialist examiners who examine injured workers with head injuries, excluding neuropsychological evaluation.

Head injuries may present with a wide variety of clinical manifestations which impact function, primarily affecting the central and peripheral nervous systems. The *Guides*, Chapter 13, outlines the examination components necessary to provide an adequate impairment estimate for these types of injuries.

The first step is to evaluate cerebral function in four categories: 1) consciousness and awareness; 2) mental status and integrative function; 3) use of language, and; 4) emotional and behavioral disturbances. This information is obtained primarily by review of the history, review of systems, a solid [mental status examination](#), and observation.

The report should specify if the impairment due to head injury involves any, all, or none of these areas of function. The information gathered is then applied to the appropriate tables in Chapter 13, which provide ranges of percentage of impairment. The examiner chooses the most impactful of these, and combines the percentage of impairment from that area of function with the percentage of impairment due to other potential clinical manifestations, discussed below.

- [Cranial nerves impairment](#) due to head injury – each nerve needs to be examined, as each has its own potential contribution to the percentage of impairment.
- Gait, station, and movement impairment due to head injury – impairment is estimated based upon reported function and verified by observation.
- Upper extremity impairment due to head injury – this impairment is also estimated based upon reported function and verified by observation.

Specialists performing Permanent Total Disability independent medical examinations for the Ohio Industrial Commission are required to document references to the *Guides*, including citations to specific tables, figures and/or page numbers, to assist reviewers in understanding the justification for the impairment rating. Adherence to the guidance in Chapter 13, as outlined above, will assure confidence in a fair, unbiased, objective, and credible evaluation of impairment due to head injury.

Heads up!

Medical Services' scheduling section began uploading referral packets for examinations to examiners' ICON accounts in January 2023. This packet includes the referral letter, assessment form, and fee bill.

We updated this process in response to panel member feedback requesting the ability to access claim documents electronically from multiple locations. Please be sure you have access to these documents before each examination. Hard copies will no longer be sent by mail.

All claim file documents, the Medical Scheduling Work Sheet (MEWS), and the Permanent Total Disability Statement of Facts (PTD SOF) will continue to be available in your ICON account. To view these, go to "Find a Claim", then "All Documents View".

Did you know?

Fees for services performed by independent specialist examiners for the Ohio Industrial Commission are set by Commission resolution: [Fee Bill Resolution R19-01-01.pdf](#) (state.oh.us). For clarification, the fee for completing a file review shall be \$300.00 an hour, prorated per fifteen minutes, with a maximum fee of \$900.00.

MediScene Review Questions

You have read the content, now earn some credit!*

DIRECTIONS AND SUBMISSION

After reviewing the material in the newsletter, please fill in your name, date, time spent on the activity, and your answers to the review questions. When completed, you may print this page and fax it to 614-466-1051, attention Medical Services, subject "MediScene Review Questions", to be placed in your file and held for your future reapplication. Alternatively, you may save your completed form to your computer by choosing "Print", and then choose "Destination" as "Save to PDF". Please email the saved document as an attachment to medical.services@ic.ohio.gov, subject line "MediScene Review Questions".

Your Name:

Date:

Time Spent on

CME Activity:

(Maximum 30 minutes)

- 1. According to the *Guides*, an adequate evaluation of a head injury would include documentation of inquiry regarding which of the following?**
 - A. seizure
 - B. alertness
 - C. ability for self-care
 - D. communication abilities
 - E. emotional or behavioral disturbances
 - F. vision
 - G. all of the above
- 2. According to the *Guides*, an adequate evaluation of a head injury would include documentation of examination of:**
 - A. mental status
 - B. balance
 - C. the cranial nerves
 - D. A. and C.
 - E. all of the above
- 3. Which of the following are essential components of the information required by the *Guides* when estimating impairment due to head injury?**
 - A. handedness
 - B. reported need for assistance with mobility
 - C. observation of gait, if ambulatory
 - D. A. and C.
 - E. all of the above
- 4. Fees for examination and review services for independent specialist examiners for the IC are set by Commission resolution.**
 - A. true
 - B. false
- 5. Claim and examination information for independent specialist examiners for IC examinations is delivered:**
 - A. as hard copies by the U.S. Postal Service, to the examiners' primary office.
 - B. electronically, to the examiners' ICON account.
 - C. both as hard copies by the U.S. Postal Service, to the examiners' primary office and electronically, to the examiners' ICON account.