

bag strap slapped her in the face. She did not stop working. The Office accepted the claim for conjunctival hemorrhage.

Appellant filed a recurrence claim for medical treatment on October 8, 2003. She alleged that she had “recurrent swelling, irritation, drainage, small bump on eyelid which is starting to enlarge” since June 9, 2003. Appellant did not claim any lost time from work on the recurrence form.

On November 25, 2003 the Office received a November 6, 2003 statement from appellant regarding her request for further medical treatment and new glass lenses, a November 12, 2003 report by Dr. Cami Watkins, a treating Board-certified internist, and an October 31, 2003 prescription for glasses signed by Dr. Alan P. Kretchmar, a treating Board-certified ophthalmologist. Dr. Watkins diagnosed subconjunctival hemorrhage and contusion due to her June 9, 2003 employment injury and noted that appellant “apparently has developed cysts at the area of the injury and is in need of glasses.” The October 31, 2003 prescription contains a notation “new glasses -- eyes worse since injury.”¹

By decision dated January 12, 2004, the Office denied appellant’s claim as the evidence failed to establish a diagnosis “of a medical condition that may have resulted in disability related to the previously accepted condition or work-related event.” Additionally, the Office found that the medical evidence failed to establish the need for new eyeglasses and the causal relationship to the accepted condition.

On January 12, 2004 the Office received a December 12, 2003 report by Dr. John B. Holds, a treating Board-certified ophthalmologist, attributing appellant’s cyst to her employment injury. A physical examination revealed “a marginal laceration medially with an adjacent epithelial cyst.” Dr. Holds performed an excision of the cyst on November 6, 2003 “[a]s this lesion was likely to enlarge with time.”

On January 28, 2004 appellant requested reconsideration and submitted additional medical reports. In a January 27, 2003 report, Dr. Kretchmar reported finding “a small inclusion cyst right upper lid and a recurrent corneal erosion was noted on [appellant]’s right eye” upon physical examination. He reported her four-year-old right eye visual acuity as “-0.24 -0.25 x 86 + 1.75” and her current right eye visual acuity as “plano -0.50 x 85 + 2.00.”

By letter dated February 6, 2004, the Office allotted appellant 20 days within which to submit additional information.

In a November 10, 2003 report, Dr. Holds diagnosed a right upper eyelid cystic lesion and that an excisional biopsy “was performed in the office” on November 6, 2003. On December 12, 2003 he reported that appellant sustained an employment-related laceration of the right upper lid margin when the strap of a suitcase struck her in the performance of duty in June 2003, that a cyst developed as the injury healed and that he removed the cyst on November 6, 2003.

¹ It is unclear who was the author of this notation.

By decision dated April 26, 2004, the Office found the evidence sufficient to establish that appellant's right upper lid, medially, epithelial cyst was employment related and that the excision of the cyst performed on November 6, 2003 was authorized. The Office vacated in part the January 12, 2004 decision denying acceptance of the cyst. The Office denied her request for authorization of payment for new prescription glass lenses, finding that the evidence failed to support that any change in eyesight was due to the accepted injury thereby requiring new prescription lenses.

LEGAL PRECEDENT

An employee is entitled to receive all medical services, appliances or supplies which a qualified physician prescribes or recommends and which the Office considers necessary to treat a work-related injury.² While the Office is obligated to pay for treatment of employment-related conditions, appellant has the burden of establishing that the expenditure is incurred for treatment of the effects of an employment-related injury or condition.³ To be entitled to reimbursement of medical expenses by the Office, appellant must establish a causal relationship between the expenditure and the treatment by submitting rationalized medical evidence supporting such a connection and demonstrating that the treatment is necessary and reasonable.⁴

ANALYSIS

In the instant case, appellant contends that she required new prescription glass lenses as a result of her accepted June 9, 2003 employment injury. In support of her claim, she submitted reports from Dr. Kretchmar. On October 31, 2003 he issued a prescription for new glass lenses. The prescription also contained a notation on it stating "new glasses -- eyes worse since injury. In a January 27, 2003 report, Dr. Kretchmar reported finding a cyst on the right upper eyelid and "recurrent corneal erosion" of the right eye. With regard to her right eye visual acuity, he reported her prior right eye visual acuity was "-0.24 -0.25 x 86 + 1.75" and her current right eye visual acuity was "plano -0.50 x 85 + 2.00." However, Dr. Kretchmar's report and prescription note do not address the issue of causal relationship, *i.e.*, how appellant's change in prescription for glass lenses was due to the accepted June 9, 2003 employment injury. The Board has held that medical reports which do not contain any rationale on causal relation are of diminished probative value and are insufficient to meet an employee's burden of proof.⁵

The Board finds that appellant has not established through rationalized medical evidence that the June 9, 2003 employment injury caused or contributed to the change in prescription for glass lenses. As such, the Office properly denied her request for authorization of payment for new prescription glass lenses.

² 5 U.S.C. § 8103(a); 20 C.F.R. § 10.310(a); *see Lisa DeLindsay*, 51 ECAB 634 (2000).

³ *Dale E. Jones*, 48 ECAB 648 (1997).

⁴ *Cathy B. Millin*, 51 ECAB 331 (2000).

⁵ *See Lois E. Culver (Clair L. Culver)*, 53 ECAB 412 (2002).

CONCLUSION

The Board finds that the Office properly denied payment for new prescription glass lenses.

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the decision of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs dated April 26, 2004 is affirmed.

Issued: November 4, 2005
Washington, DC

David S. Gerson, Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Willie T.C. Thomas, Alternate Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Michael E. Groom, Alternate Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board