

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM13-0009549		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	03/10/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	01/27/2000
<b>Decision Date:</b>	04/04/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/30/2013
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/06/2013

### HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Pain Management, has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine and is licensed to practice in California. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The expert reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

### CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

The patient is a 53-year-old male with a date of injury of 01/27/2000. Per [REDACTED] report dated 07/08/2013, the listed diagnoses are: (1) Chronic lumbar pain with lumbar extensor strain; (2) Possible left L5 versus S1 radiculopathy; (3) Status post anterior fusion and laminectomy. According to the report dated 07/08/2013 by [REDACTED], the patient presents with chronic low back pain. The patient states that the pain starts in the low back and radiates to the base of his head with muscle tightness, stiffness, and spasms. The patient also states that back pain radiates down to his lower leg as well. It was noted that the patient also has sharp, stabbing pain in the left knee with numbness and tingling that radiates down to his toes bilaterally. Objective findings show that the patient has tenderness along the lumbar paraspinal muscles and positive straight leg raise on the left at 70 degrees.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

#### **1 PRESCRIPTION OF FLEXERIL 7.5MG #60 BETWEEN 7/8/2013 AND 9/23/2013:**

Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 64.

**Decision rationale:** This patient presents with chronic low back pain. The provider is requesting Flexeril 7.5 mg #60. The MTUS Guidelines state that Cyclobenzaprine is recommended for a short course of therapy. Limited, mixed-evidence does not allow for recommendation for chronic use. The medical records provided for review indicate that this patient has been taking Flexeril since 01/09/2013. The guidelines do not recommend long-term use of muscle relaxants and recommends using this type of drug for 3 to 4 days for acute spasm and no more than 2 to 3 weeks. Therefore, the requested Flexeril 7.5 mg #60 is not medically necessary or appropriate.

**1 BACK BRACE BETWEEN 7/8/2013 AND 9/23/2013:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 298.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 301, 308. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG)

**Decision rationale:** This patient presents with chronic low back pain. The provider is requesting a low back brace replacement due to his brace being worn out. The ACOEM Guidelines state that lumbar supports have not been shown to have any lasting benefit beyond the acute phase of symptom relief. The guidelines also say that a corset for treatment is not recommended. Therefore, the requested back brace is not medically necessary or appropriate.