

Case Number:	CM13-0041637		
Date Assigned:	12/20/2013	Date of Injury:	09/13/2011
Decision Date:	02/19/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/04/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/11/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to a physician reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The physician reviewer is Board Certified in Orthopedic Surgery 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 physician 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 62-year-old female who was injured on 09/13/11. The clinical requests in this case are in regard to postoperative medications that were prescribed on 10/01/13. The clinical records for review documented that the claimant had complaints of pain about the right knee with mechanical symptoms and "giving way." Apparently, a surgical arthroscopy was being recommended for further treatment. The claimant's current working diagnosis was right knee medial meniscal tear, possible lateral meniscal tear, and chondromalacia to the patella. Medications in the form of Keflex, Norco, and Tramadol were all prescribed for postoperative use.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Post-operative medication 28 capsules of Keflex 500mg between 10/1/13 and 11/15/13:
Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) infectious chapter-Cephalexin (Keflex).

Decision rationale: California MTUS ACOEM Guidelines are silent. When looking at Official Disability Guidelines criteria, Keflex would not be indicated. ODG Guidelines would not support the routine use of postoperative antibiotics for a knee arthroscopy. There is nothing in the medical records provided for review indicating an acute infectious process in this case for which this medication would be warranted. The current standards of care would support the role of perioperative antibiotics intravenously prior to operative intervention, but would not support the acute need of oral antibiotics following a routine knee procedure.

Post-operative medication 45 tablets of Norco 10/325mg: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids..

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids-Criteria For Use Page(s): 76-80.

Decision rationale: Based on California MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, Norco would be supported. The claimant is to undergo a surgical process to the knee for which postoperative use of short term narcotic analgesics would be indicated given the nature of the surgery in question.

Post-operative medication 90 tablets of Tramadol, 50mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 13 Knee Complaints, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids..

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids-Tramadol (Ultram)..

Decision rationale: Based on California MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009 Guidelines, the role of Tramadol would not be supported. First and foremost, the claimant was prescribed two analgesics, Norco and Tramadol, in the postoperative setting following knee arthroscopy. There is no documentation in the medical records to support why one analgesic alone would not suffice. While this reviewer approved the prescription of Norco, the use of Tramadol for concordant use would not be indicated due to the redundancy of the type of medication request at this time.