

Case Number:	CM13-0042124		
Date Assigned:	12/27/2013	Date of Injury:	02/23/2012
Decision Date:	02/12/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/10/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/16/2013

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 Emergency Medicine and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 53-year-old female who was injured on February 23, 2012 while carrying out the trash. The patient developed lower back and left hip pain. MRI of the lumbar spine done on March 12, 2012 showed prolapsed disc disease at L4-5 and L5-S1, facet arthropathy from L4-S1, and central canal stenosis and bilateral neural foraminal narrowing at L4-5 and L5-S1. Diagnoses included degenerative spondylolisthesis at L4-5 and L5-S1 and advanced degenerative joint disease of the left hip. The patient had been treated with medication, steroid injections, acupuncture, and chiropractic therapy. A request for retrospective authorization for Medrox patches #30 for 6 months was received October 10, 2013.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retrospective Medrox Patch #30, DOS: 2/28/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 2009, Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

Decision rationale: Medrox patch is a topical analgesic containing methylsalicylate, menthol, and capsaicin. Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants

and antidepressants have failed. There is not documentation that this patient has been treated with either of those classes of medications. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. Furthermore, the guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." Methylsalicylate is a topical salicylate and is recommended, being significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. There are no guidelines present for menthol. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. It cannot be recommended. Capsaicin is recommended only as an option in patients who have not responded or cannot tolerate other treatments. It is recommended for osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic non-specific back pain and is considered experimental in high doses. It is not recommended in this case. This compounded drug is not recommended. It contains two drugs that are not recommended. Therefore it is not recommended.

Retrospective Medrox Patch #30, DOS 4/2/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 2009, Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

Decision rationale: Medrox patch is a topical analgesic containing methylsalicylate, menthol, and capsaicin. Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants and antidepressants have failed. There is not documentation that this patient has been treated with either of those classes of medications. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. Furthermore, the guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." Methylsalicylate is a topical salicylate and is recommended, being significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. There are no guidelines present for menthol. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. It cannot be recommended. Capsaicin is recommended only as an option in patients who have not responded or cannot tolerate other treatments. It is recommended for osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic non-specific back pain and is considered experimental in high doses. It is not recommended in this case. This compounded drug is not recommended. It contains two drugs that are not recommended. Therefore it is not recommended.

Retrospective Medrox Patch #30, DOS: 4/30/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 2009, Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

Decision rationale: Medrox patch is a topical analgesic containing methylsalicylate, menthol, and capsaicin. Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants

and antidepressants have failed. There is not documentation that this patient has been treated with either of those classes of medications. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. Furthermore, the guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." Methylsalicylate is a topical salicylate and is recommended, being significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. There are no guidelines present for menthol. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. It cannot be recommended. Capsaicin is recommended only as an option in patients who have not responded or cannot tolerate other treatments. It is recommended for osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic non-specific back pain and is considered experimental in high doses. It is not recommended in this case. This compounded drug is not recommended. It contains two drugs that are not recommended. Therefore it is not recommended.

Retrospective Medrox Patch #30, DOS: 5/31/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 2009, Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

Decision rationale: Medrox patch is a topical analgesic containing methylsalicylate, menthol, and capsaicin. Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants and antidepressants have failed. There is not documentation that this patient has been treated with either of those classes of medications. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. Furthermore, the guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." Methylsalicylate is a topical salicylate and is recommended, being significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. There are no guidelines present for menthol. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. It cannot be recommended. Capsaicin is recommended only as an option in patients who have not responded or cannot tolerate other treatments. It is recommended for osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic non-specific back pain and is considered experimental in high doses. It is not recommended in this case. This compounded drug is not recommended. It contains two drugs that are not recommended. Therefore it is not recommended.

Retrospective Medrox Patch #30, DOS: 6/28/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 2009, Topical Analgesics.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

Decision rationale: Medrox patch is a topical analgesic containing methylsalicylate, menthol, and capsaicin. Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants

and antidepressants have failed. There is not documentation that this patient has been treated with either of those classes of medications. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. Furthermore, the guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." Methylsalicylate is a topical salicylate and is recommended, being significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. There are no guidelines present for menthol. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. It cannot be recommended. Capsaicin is recommended only as an option in patients who have not responded or cannot tolerate other treatments. It is recommended for osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic non-specific back pain and is considered experimental in high doses. It is not recommended in this case. This compounded drug is not recommended. It contains two drugs that are not recommended. Therefore it is not recommended.

Retrospective Medrox Patch #30, DOS: 7/26/13: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 2009, Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Interventions and Guidelines Page(s): 111-112.

Decision rationale: Medrox patch is a topical analgesic containing methylsalicylate, menthol, and capsaicin. Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants and antidepressants have failed. There is not documentation that this patient has been treated with either of those classes of medications. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. Furthermore, the guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." Methylsalicylate is a topical salicylate and is recommended, being significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. There are no guidelines present for menthol. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. It cannot be recommended. Capsaicin is recommended only as an option in patients who have not responded or cannot tolerate other treatments. It is recommended for osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic non-specific back pain and is considered experimental in high doses. It is not recommended in this case. This compounded drug is not recommended. It contains two drugs that are not recommended. Therefore it is not recommended.