

Case Number:	CM13-0048478		
Date Assigned:	12/27/2013	Date of Injury:	03/24/2011
Decision Date:	02/21/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/30/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/30/2013

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 Emergencu Medicine and is licensed to practice in New York and Tennessee. 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 65-year-old female who was injured on March 24, 2011 when she fell on her hands and knees in a parking lot. The patient continues to experience right wrist pain, back pain, left hip pain, and bilateral knee pain. Diagnoses included lumbar disc disease, lumbar facet hypertrophy, and spinal stenosis. Treatments included physical therapy, steroid injections, and medications. Requests for Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 30%, Methyl Salicylate 4%, tramadol 10%, Menthol 2%, camphor 2% 240 grams, Flurbiprofen 20%, tramadol 20%, 240 grams, and Medrox patches #30 were submitted on August 22, 2013.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Capsaicin 0.025%/Flurbiprofen 30%/Methyl Salicylate 4%/ Tramadol 10%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 240 grams: Upheld

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

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

Decision rationale: Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants and antidepressants have failed. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly

prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. 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. Flurbiprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug. Topical NSAIDS have been shown to be superior to placebo in the treatment of osteoarthritis, but only in the short term and not for extended treatment. The effect appears to diminish over time. Absorption of the medication can occur and may have systemic side effects comparable to oral form. Adverse effects for GI toxicity and renal function have been reported. It has not been evaluated for treatment of the spine, hip, or shoulder. Methylsalicylate is a topical salicylate and is recommended, being significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. Tramadol is a centrally acting synthetic opioid analgesic and it is not recommended as a first-line oral analgesic. There are no recommendations with regards to topical use. There are no guidelines present for menthol or camphor. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. The guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." This medication contains medications that are not recommended and, is therefore not recommended.

Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 20%, 240 grams: Upheld

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

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

Decision rationale: Topical analgesics are recommended for neuropathic pain when anticonvulsants and antidepressants have failed. Compounded topical analgesics are commonly prescribed and there is little to no research to support the use of these compounds. Flurbiprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug. Topical NSAIDS have been shown to be superior to placebo in the treatment of osteoarthritis, but only in the short term and not for extended treatment. The effect appears to diminish over time. Absorption of the medication can occur and may have systemic side effects comparable to oral form. Adverse effects for GI toxicity and renal function have been reported. It has not been evaluated for treatment of the spine, hip, or shoulder. Tramadol is a centrally acting synthetic opioid analgesic and it is not recommended as a first-line oral analgesic. There are no recommendations with regards to topical use. There are no guidelines present for menthol or camphor. The lack of information does not allow determination for medical necessity and safety. The guidelines state that "Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended." This medication contains medications that are not recommended and, is therefore not recommended.

Medrox patches #30: Upheld

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