

Case Number:	CM14-0000468		
Date Assigned:	01/10/2014	Date of Injury:	05/13/2010
Decision Date:	04/02/2014	UR Denial Date:	12/05/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/02/2014

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 Anesthesiology, Pain Management, and is licensed to practice in Florida. 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 61-year-old female who reported an injury on 05/13/2010 due to cumulative trauma while performing normal job duties. The patient failed to respond to conservative treatments and ultimately underwent lumbar spine surgery in 2005 followed by an additional surgery in 2012. The patient's treatment history included a corticosteroid injection to the left shoulder and a lumbar epidural steroid injection. The patient's most recent clinical findings documented that the patient had limited right shoulder and left shoulder range of motion secondary to pain, a positive impingement sign bilaterally, decreased grip strength on the left side with decreased motor strength rated at 4/5. The patient's diagnoses included cervical disc syndrome, bilateral shoulder rotator cuff rupture, lumbar disc disease, low back syndrome, and diabetes. The request was made for topical analgesics to assist the patient with pain control and decrease the patient's need for oral medications.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

TGHOT AND FLURFLEX (COMPOUND CREAMS): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

Decision rationale: The requested TG Hot and Flurflex compounded creams are not medically necessary or appropriate. The requested Flurflex is a compounded medication that contains cyclobenzaprine and gabapentin. California Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule does not support the use of gabapentin or muscle relaxants such as cyclobenzaprine for topical use as there is little scientific evidence to support the safety and efficacy of that medication and topical formulation. Therefore, the use of Flurflex would not be medically appropriate. Additionally, the requested TG Hot is a compounded medication that contains tramadol/gabapentin/menthol/camphor/capsaicin. California Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule does not support the use of gabapentin. Additionally, California Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule only recommends the use of capsaicin as a topical analgesic when the patient has failed to respond to other first-line treatments. The clinical documentation does not provide any evidence that the patient has failed to respond to first-line medications to include anticonvulsants and antidepressants. Also, peer review literature does recommend the use of tramadol as a topical analgesic, as there is little scientific evidence to support the efficacy and safety of opioids in a topical formulation. Therefore, the use of TG Hot would not be supported. As such, the requested TG Hot and Flurflex compounded creams are not medically necessary or appropriate.