

Case Number:	CM14-0122031		
Date Assigned:	08/06/2014	Date of Injury:	05/07/2011
Decision Date:	10/01/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/07/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/01/2014

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 Anesthesiology 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:

This case involves a 56-year-old female with a date of injury of 05/07/2011. The patient's diagnoses included cervicalgia, cervical radiculopathy, lumbar radiculopathy, disc protrusion, myalgia, headaches, neck pain and low back pain. The patient reports pain as a 7 to 8 on a scale of 1 to 10. The patient also reports numbness and tingling in bilateral hands and feet. According to the medical record this patient reports temporary relief from pain with medications such as Naproxen.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retro DOS 12/31/12: TRAMCAPC 120gm (Capsaicin powder 0.0004, Menthol crystals 12.000, Camphor crystals 3.000, Tramadol HCL powder 24.000, Ultraderm base cream 80.956: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Capsaicin, Topical Analgesics Tramadol, Page(s): 28-29, 60, 75, 93-94, 111-113.

Decision rationale: In general topical analgesics are largely experimental and primarily recommended for neuropathic pain after failure of antidepressants, per MTUS Guidelines.

Capsaicin specifically is recommended as an option for patients who have not responded or are intolerant of other treatments. There is no documentation indicating this patient has not responded or is intolerant to other treatments. There is no documentation indicating the reason for the request of this combination of topical analgesics. MTUS is silent on Menthol crystals and Camphor crystals. Tramadol is a synthetic opioid. Tramadol is not recommended as a first line agent for pain relief. According to MTUS guidelines there are several agents including opioids that may be compounded for pain control. There is little research to support the use of these agents. Per MTUS Guidelines, any product that is compounded and contains at least one drug that is not recommended is not recommended. Therefore, the above listed issue is considered not medically necessary.

Retro DOS 12/12/12: DILFLUR 120gm (Flurbiprofen powder 30.000, Diclofenac sodium powder 12.000, Ultraderm Base cream 78.000): Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Flurbiprofen Page(s): 70-72, 111-113. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Topical Analgesics, NSAIDs

Decision rationale: In general topical analgesics are largely experimental and primarily recommended for neuropathic pain per MTUS Guidelines. Flurbiprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). Diclofenac (gel) is an NSAID and is FDA approved for relief of osteoarthritis pain. Oral NSAID's are generally recommended with some precautions. MTUS is silent on specific recommendation for topical Flurbiprofen; however, the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) specifically does not recommend NSAIDs (including Flurbiprofen) for widespread musculoskeletal pain. There is no evidence to support the use of topical NSAIDs for low back pain. For other sources of pain such as osteoarthritis of the knee, elbow or hand, topical NSAIDs are recommended for short-term use. There is no documentation indicating the reason or particular area or placement indicated for the topical analgesic. There is no documentation indicating this patient has not responded or is intolerant to other treatments. There is no documentation indicating the reason for the request of this combination of two topical NSAID analgesics. In general more than one topical NSAID could produce a higher level of drug with higher systemic availability and risk for toxicity. Toxicity of dose has not been established for topical NSAIDs. Per MTUS Guidelines, any product that is compounded and contains at least one drug that is not recommended is not recommended. Therefore, the above listed issue is considered not medically necessary.

Retro DOS 11/01/12: TRAMCAPC 120gm (Capsaicin powder 0.044, Menthol crystals 12.000, Camphor crystals 3.000, Tramadol HCL powder 24.000, Ultraderm base cream 80.956): Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Capsaicin, Topical Analgesics Tramadol Page(s): 28-29, 60, 75, 93-94, 111-113.

Decision rationale: In general topical analgesics are largely experimental and primarily recommended for neuropathic pain after failure of antidepressants, per MTUS Guidelines. Capsaicin specifically is recommended as an option for patients who have not responded or are intolerant of other treatments. There is no documentation indicating this patient has not responded or is intolerant to other treatments. There is no documentation indicating the reason for the request of this combination of topical analgesics. MTUS is silent on menthol crystals and camphor crystals. Tramadol is a synthetic opioid. Tramadol is not recommended as a first line agent for pain relief. According to MTUS guidelines there are several agents including opioids that may be compounded for pain control. There is little research to support the use of these agents. Per MTUS Guidelines, any product that is compounded and contains at least one drug that is not recommended is not recommended. Therefore, the above listed issue is considered not medically necessary.