

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0124338		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/08/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/26/2002
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/11/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/30/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/06/2014

### 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 Family Practice, 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:

The 62 yr. old male claimant sustained a work injury on 11/26/02 involving the both ankles. She had an MRI of the left that diagnosed her with pes planus, posterior tibial tendinopathy and chronic tarsus sinus tarsi. She had undergone prior fusion of the right ankle. Prior EMG showed demyelination and axonal loss of the left tibial nerve. He had been on Ultram for most of 2013 for pain control. He had been on topical Voltaren gel since at least Sept. 2013 for pain relief. A progress note in May 2014 indicated the claimant had persistent right ankle pain. There was tenderness in the right subtalar region and reduced sensation in the dorsal aspect of the right foot. The treating physician continued Voltaren gel and provided Norco 5 mg tablets for pain.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Retro Norco 5/35MG #60:** Upheld

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines x Opioids and pg 82-92 Page(s): 82-92.

**Decision rationale:** The 62 yr. old male claimant sustained a work injury on 11/26/02 involving the both ankles. She had an MRI of the left that diagnosed her with pes planus, posterior tibial

tendinopathy and chronic tarsus sinus tarsitis. She had undergone prior fusion of the right ankle. Prior EMG showed demyelination and axonal loss of the left tibial nerve. He had been on Ultram for most of 2013 for pain control. He had been on topical Voltaren gel since at least Sept. 2013 for pain relief. A progress note in May 2014 indicated the claimant had persistent right ankle pain. There was tenderness in the right subtalar region and reduced sensation in the dorsal aspect of the right foot. The treating physician continued Voltaren gel and provided Norco 5 mg tablets for pain.

**Retro Voltaren Gel 1 %500G:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 14 Ankle and Foot Complaints.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines x topical analgesics and pg 111-112 Page(s): 111-112.

**Decision rationale:** According to the MTUS guidelines, topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. Voltaren gel is a topical NSAID. The efficacy in clinical trials for this treatment modality has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration. Topical NSAIDs have been shown in meta-analysis to be superior to placebo during the first 2 weeks of treatment for osteoarthritis, but either not afterward, or with a diminishing effect over another 2-week period. In this case, the claimant had been on Voltaren gel for years. The continued use of Voltaren is not medically necessary.