

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0124787		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/08/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	08/02/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/17/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/18/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/05/2014

### 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, has a subspecialty in Pain Medicine and is licensed to practice in Connecticut. 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:

After careful review of the medical records, this is a 44 year old male with complaints of low back pain, neck pain, and shoulder pain. The date of injury is 8/2/13 and the mechanism of injury is repetitive bending to lift pipes weighing 150 pounds, cutting pipes, and pulling and pushing building material, climbing stairs, installing plumbing lines, operating hand tools and prolonged standing. At the time of request for menthoderm gel #160, there is subjective (low back pain, shoulder pain) and objective (Lasegue' s test and Kemp's test both positive bilateral, tenderness to palpation paraspinal muscles lumbar spine, restricted range of motion lumbar spine flexion, extension, lateral bending and rotation), imaging findings (MRI lumbar spine, cervical spine, and shoulder dated 12/10/13 shows annular tear disc L3-4 and disc bulge with impingement on exiting nerve roots, L4-5 disc bulge, cervical spondylosis with multi-level foraminal narrowing, ac arthritis left and right shoulder and tendonitis), diagnoses (cervical and lumbar sprain with disc protrusion, bilateral shoulder sprain with AC arthritis/tendonitis and gastritis secondary to NSAIDS), and treatment(s) to date (physical therapy, chiropractic care, medications, shockwave treatments). In regards to the request for Menthoderm, topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Menthoderm is a compounded topical formulation consisting of a salicylate and menthol combination. Although there is evidence of topical salicylates having analgesic benefit over placebo, there is no evidence of menthol being effective for chronic back pain and especially severe neuropathic pain.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Mentherm (Methyl Salicylate 15%/ Menthol 10%) Gel #160 gmApply 3 Times a Day, as Directed by Physician for Daytime UseRefill: 1: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines SALICYLATE TOPICAL/STOPICAL ANALGESICS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation 1.ACCORDING TO WEBMD, MENTHODERM TOPICAL COMMON BRAND NAMES INCLUDE BENGAY AND ICYHOT.<<http://www.webmd.com/drugs/drug-151934-Mentherm+Top.aspx?drugid=151934&drugname=mentherm+Top>>2. ACCORDING TO PHYSICIAN PRODUCTS INC., MENTHODERM GEL USE FOR THE TEMPORARY RELIEF OF MINOR ACHES AND MUSCLE PAINS ASSOCIATED WITH ARTHRITIS, SIMPLE BACKACHE, STRAINS, MUSCLE SORENESS AND STIFFNESS. 120GM (4OZ.) ACTIVE INGREDIENTS: METHYL SALICYLATE 15.0% ANALGESIC /COUNTERIRRITANT MENTHOL 10.0% ANALGESIC/COUNTERIRRITANT <http://www.physicianproducts.net/joomla/inex.php/topical-pain-creams/72-mentherm>.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical analgesics Page(s): 111of127.

**Decision rationale:** Per MTUS-Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Mentherm is a compounded topical formulation consisting of a salicylate and menthol combination. Although there is evidence of topical salicylates having analgesic benefit over placebo, there is no evidence of menthol being effective for chronic back pain and especially severe neuropathic pain. As stated, any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. Therefore, the request for Mentherm is not medically necessary.