

Case Number:	CM14-0139126		
Date Assigned:	09/08/2014	Date of Injury:	09/04/2001
Decision Date:	10/03/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/11/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/27/2014

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 Internal Medicine and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 claimant is a 70 yo male who sustained an industrial injury on 09/04/2001. The mechanism of injury was not provided for review. His diagnoses included levator scapular syndrome with cephalgia and low back pain- s/p laminectomy/discectomy with residual intermittent sciatica. He continues to complain of low back pain with radiation down the left leg to the calf. On exam he ambulates with an antalgic gait and there is tenderness over the suboccipital triangle on the left and medial angle of the left scapula and tenderness over the left sciatic notch. Straight leg raises are positive. Treatment has included medical therapy with topical compounds. The treating provider has requested prospective Usage of Gabapentin/Cyclobenzaprine/Lidocaine Topical Cream, and Capsaicin/Flurbiprofen/Tramadol/Menthol/Camphor Topical Cream.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Prospective Usage of Gabapentin/Cyclobenzaprine/Lidocaine Topical Cream: Upheld

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

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

Decision rationale: There is no documentation provided necessitating use of the requested topical medication. Per California MTUS Guidelines topical analgesics are primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. These agents are applied topically to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, alpha-adrenergic receptor agonist, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, γ agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor) Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. In this case there have been no studies on the use of topical Tramadol or Flurbiprofen for the treatment of chronic low back pain. Medical necessity for the requested item has not been established. The requested treatment is not medically necessary.

Capsaicin/Flurbiprofen/Tramadol/Menthol/Camphor Topical Cream: Upheld

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

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

Decision rationale: There is no documentation provided necessitating use of the requested topical medication. Per California MTUS Guidelines topical analgesics are primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. These agents are applied topically to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, alpha-adrenergic receptor agonist, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, γ agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor) Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. In this case there have been no studies on the use of topical Tramadol or Flurbiprofen for the treatment of chronic low back pain. Medical necessity for the requested item has not been established. The requested treatment is not medically necessary.