

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0153070		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/23/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	06/16/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/24/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	08/22/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	09/19/2014

### 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 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain Management 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 is a patient with a date of injury of 6/16/11. A utilization review determination dated 8/22/14 recommends non-certification of Condrolite and tramadol ER. 5/15/14 medical report identifies that medications are helpful. On exam, there is tenderness, limited ROM, positive SLR, positive McMurray's bilaterally and medial joint line tenderness on the left. Recommendations include ibuprofen, tramadol ER, and Condrolite.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Condrolite 500/200/150mg take 1 tablet 1 to 3 times daily #180:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Glucosamine (and chondroitin sulfate).

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Guidelines 8 C.C.R. 9792.20 - 9792.26 MTUS (Effective July 18, 2009) Page(s): Page 50 of 127.

**Decision rationale:** Regarding the request for Condrolite, CA MTUS states that it is recommended as an option given its low risk, in patients with moderate arthritis pain, especially for knee osteoarthritis. Within the documentation available for review, there is no indication of subjective/objective/imaging findings consistent with osteoarthritis for which the use of

glucosamine/chondroitin would be supported by the CA MTUS. In the absence of such documentation, the currently requested Condrolite is not medically necessary.

**Ttramadol ER 150mg take 1 capsule daily:** Upheld

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines 8 C.C.R. 9792.20 - 9792.26 MTUS (Effective July 18, 2009) Page(s): 44, 47, 75-79, 120 of 127.

**Decision rationale:** Regarding the request for tramadol ER, California Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines note that it is an opiate pain medication. Due to high abuse potential, close follow-up is recommended with documentation of analgesic effect, objective functional improvement, side effects, and discussion regarding any aberrant use. Guidelines go on to recommend discontinuing opioids if there is no documentation of improved function and pain. Within the documentation available for review, there is no indication that the medication is improving the patient's function or pain (in terms of specific examples of functional improvement and percent reduction in pain or reduced NRS), no documentation regarding side effects, and no discussion regarding aberrant use. As such, there is no clear indication for ongoing use of the medication. Opioids should not be abruptly discontinued, but unfortunately, there is no provision to modify the current request to allow tapering. In light of the above issues, the currently requested tramadol ER is not medically necessary.