

Case Number:	CM14-0164265		
Date Assigned:	11/05/2014	Date of Injury:	11/15/2002
Decision Date:	12/09/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/06/2014

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 Medicine and is licensed to practice in North Carolina. 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 patient is a 47-year-old with a reported date of injury of 11/15/2002. The patient has the diagnoses of post fusion syndrome from surgery performed in 2005. The most recent progress reports provided for review from the primary treating physician dated 09/08/2014 indicate the patient had complaints of constant moderate pain in the low back and left leg. The physical exam noted lumbar paraspinal tenderness bilaterally with no other sensory or motor deficits. Treatment plan recommendations included refill for chronic medications.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Soma 350mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle Relaxants (For Pain).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines muscle relaxants Page(s): 63-65.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on Muscle Relaxants states: Recommend non-sedating muscle relaxants with caution as a second-line option for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations in patients with chronic LBP. (Chou, 2007) (Mens, 2005) (Van Tulder, 1998) (van Tulder, 2003) (van Tulder, 2006) (Schnitzer, 2004)

(See, 2008) Muscle relaxants may be effective in reducing pain and muscle tension, and increasing mobility. However, in most LBP cases, they show no benefit beyond NSAIDs in pain and overall improvement. Also there is no additional benefit shown in combination with NSAIDs. Efficacy appears to diminish over time, and prolonged use of some medications in this class may lead to dependence. (Homik, 2004) Carisoprodol (Soma, generic available): Neither of these formulations is recommended for longer than a 2 to 3 week period. Carisoprodol is metabolized to meprobamate an anxiolytic that is a schedule IV controlled substance. The long term chronic use of this medication is not recommended per the California MTUS. The medication has not been prescribed for the acute flare up of chronic low back pain. The specific use of this medication for greater than 3 weeks is not recommended per the California MTUS. The criteria set forth above for its use has not been met. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.