

Case Number:	CM14-0180207		
Date Assigned:	11/04/2014	Date of Injury:	09/08/2005
Decision Date:	12/17/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/21/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/30/2014

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 Occupational Medicine 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:

Patient is a 47 year-old male with date of injury 09/08/2005. The medical document associated with the request for authorization, a primary treating physician's progress report, dated 10/08/2014, lists subjective complaints as pain in the right elbow that extends to the fingers of the right hand. Objective findings: Examination of the right shoulder revealed full passive range of motion and full strength. There was tenderness to palpation of the greater tuberosity. Bilateral elbow exam revealed marked tenderness to palpation of the medial epicondyle on the right. There was full motion and strength of the elbow. Sensory examination was normal. Diagnosis: 1. History of right shoulder arthroscopy, times two 2. Persistent mild lateral epicondylitis, right 3. New onset of bilateral medial epicondylitis (non-industrial). The medical records supplied for review document that the patient has been taking the following medication for at least as far back as six months. Medications: 1. Norco 7.5/325mg to 10/325mg, #120 SIG: Q8hrs to Q6-8hrs.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 7.5/325mg-10/325mg #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 81.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 74-94.

Decision rationale: The Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that continued or long-term use of opioids should be based on documented pain relief and functional improvement or improved quality of life. Despite the long-term use of narcotics, the patient has reported very little functional improvement over the course of at least 6 months. Therefore, Norco 7.5/325mg-10/325mg #120 is not medically necessary and appropriate.