

Case Number:	CM14-0185334		
Date Assigned:	11/13/2014	Date of Injury:	07/22/2014
Decision Date:	12/15/2014	UR Denial Date:	11/03/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/06/2014

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 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation 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 33 year-old patient sustained an injury on 7/22/14 after caring for two laboring patients while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include 1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg and 1 Mentherm Ointment 120ml. Diagnoses include neck sprain. MRI of the cervical spine dated 9/6/14 showed minimal disc degenerative disease without stenosis, foraminal narrowing or nerve impingement. Report of 10/15/14 from the provider noted the patient with neck pain radiating down both arms, increased with movements of lifting and reaching. Medications list Robaxin and Norco. Exam showed cervical spine with flex/ext/lateral bending and rotation of 50/60/45/80 degrees; positive right Spurling's with normal DTRs, sensation and motor strength throughout upper extremities. The request(s) for 1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg and 1 Mentherm Ointment 120ml were non-certified on 11/3/14 citing guidelines criteria and lack of medical necessity.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Oral corticosteroids, page 624

Decision rationale: This 33 year-old patient sustained an injury on 7/22/14 after caring for two laboring patients while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include 1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg and 1 Mentoderm Ointment 120ml. Diagnoses include neck sprain. MRI of the cervical spine dated 9/6/14 showed minimal disc degenerative disease without stenosis, foraminal narrowing or nerve impingement. Report of 10/15/14 from the provider noted the patient with neck pain radiating down both arms, increased with movements of lifting and reaching. Medications list Robaxin and Norco. Exam showed cervical spine with flex/ext/ lateral bending and rotation of 50/60/45/80 degrees; positive right Spurling's with normal DTRs, sensation and motor strength throughout upper extremities. The request(s) for 1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg and 1 Mentoderm Ointment 120ml were non-certified on 11/3/14. Per the guidelines, oral corticosteroids are not recommended for acute, sub-Acute and chronic spine pain due to the lack of sufficient literature evidence (risk vs. benefit, lack of clear literature) and association with multiple severe adverse effects with its use. There is also limited available research evidence which indicates that oral steroids do not appear to be an effective treatment for patients with spine problems and has serious potential complications associated with long-term use. The patient has treated for this injury without demonstrated failed first line medications already received. The 1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg is not medically necessary and appropriate.

1 Mentoderm Ointment 120ml: 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: This 33 year-old patient sustained an injury on 7/22/14 after caring for two laboring patients while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include 1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg and 1 Mentoderm Ointment 120ml. Diagnoses include neck sprain. MRI of the cervical spine dated 9/6/14 showed minimal disc degenerative disease without stenosis, foraminal narrowing or nerve impingement. Report of 10/15/14 from the provider noted the patient with neck pain radiating down both arms, increased with movements of lifting and reaching. Medications list Robaxin and Norco. Exam showed cervical spine with flex/ext/ lateral bending and rotation of 50/60/45/80 degrees; positive right Spurling's with normal DTRs, sensation and motor strength throughout upper extremities. The request(s) for 1 Dose Pack of Medrol (21 tablets) 4mg and 1 Mentoderm Ointment 120ml were non-certified on 11/3/14. Per MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines, the efficacy in clinical trials for topical analgesic treatment modality has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration. These medications may be useful for chronic musculoskeletal pain, but there are no long-term studies of their effectiveness or safety. There is little evidence to utilize topical analgesic over oral NSAIDs or other pain relievers for a patient with spinal and multiple joint pain without

contraindication in taking oral medications. Submitted reports have not adequately demonstrated the indication or medical need for this topical analgesic for this injury without documented functional improvement from conservative treatment rendered. The 1 Menthoderm Ointment 120ml is not medically necessary and appropriate.