

Case Number:	CM14-0024025		
Date Assigned:	06/11/2014	Date of Injury:	09/28/2012
Decision Date:	07/15/2014	UR Denial Date:	02/20/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/25/2014

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 & Rehabilitation, has a subspecialty in Pain 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:

This is a patient with a date of injury of 9/28/12. A utilization review determination dated 2/20/14 recommends non-certification of Flector patches and Blaine scar care solution. A 2/4/14 medical report identifies that the patient states his right knee and ankle are bothering him. The ankle gives way. He is using Flector patches. On exam, there is soft tissue thickening of the distal one-third of the left fibula and a dry scab over the lateral aspect of the foot in the area of the fourth/fifth metatarsocuboidal articulation. There is percussive tenderness over the superficial peroneal nerve, particularly laterally. There is tenderness over the fracture site, mainly in the soft tissues and tenderness over the second and third metatarsocuneiform articulations and over the lateral aspect of the foot. Mild tenderness was over the fifth metatarsal, fourth metatarsophalangeal joint, and first metatarsophalangeal joint. Eversion is 4/5. The patient had a crush injury to the left foot and ankle with fractures.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

FLECTOR PATCHES 1.3% #50: Upheld

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

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

Decision rationale: California MTUS cites that topical NSAIDs are indicated for osteoarthritis and tendinitis, in particular, that of the knee and elbow or other joints that are amenable to topical treatment: Recommended for short-term use (4-12 weeks). There is little evidence to utilize topical NSAIDs for treatment of osteoarthritis of the spine, hip or shoulder. They are not recommended for neuropathic pain as there is no evidence to support use. Within the documentation available for review, the patient is noted to have a history of a crush injury with some persistent pain and tenderness. However, the indications noted above have not been met. Furthermore, there is no documentation of any significant quantified pain relief and/or functional improvement resulting from prior use of Flector patches. In light of the above issues, the currently requested Flector patches 1.3% #50 are not medically necessary.

BLAINE SCAR CARE SOLUTION: 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 Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23914643> and <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10417589>.

Decision rationale: California MTUS and ODG do not address the issue. It is noted to contain vitamin E, an unnamed skin antioxidant, and silicone liquid gel. A search of the National Library of Medicine identified multiple studies concluding that the application of vitamin E to scars does not result in any significant benefit. In light of the above, the currently requested Blaine Scar Care Solution is not medically necessary.