

Case Number:	CM14-0040546		
Date Assigned:	06/20/2014	Date of Injury:	12/18/2006
Decision Date:	08/14/2014	UR Denial Date:	03/01/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/10/2014

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 Practice 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:

The claimant is a 42-year-old male who sustained a work-related injury on December 18, 2006 involving the low back and lower extremities. He had magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) performed, which supported the diagnoses of degenerative disc disease and foraminal stenosis of the L4 - L5 lumbar region. He also had narrowing of the L4-L5 neuroforaminal consistent with a probable herniated nucleus pulposus. He has a chronic medical history of Down's syndrome. His pain is been treated with opioids (Norco for over a year) and anti-inflammatories. A progress note on January 23, 2014 indicated that Norco results in constipation. For this reason, the claimant had been taking Colace.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

One prescription of Colace 100mg: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 82-92.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS guidelines, prophylactic treatment of constipation should be initiated with opioid use. The claimant had been on opioids for over a year without use

of prophylaxis. There is no mention of trial of alternative pain medications to avoid constipation rather than treating constipation. The request for Colace is not medically necessary.