

Case Number:	CM14-0057558		
Date Assigned:	07/09/2014	Date of Injury:	12/14/2011
Decision Date:	10/16/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/10/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/28/2014

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:

On 4/10/14 Utilization Review non-certified Apptrim capsules, noting the lack of guideline support for medical foods. This is a 57 year-old female who has reported the gradual onset of mental illness and multifocal pain attributed to work activities, with a listed injury date of 12/14/11. Orthopedic diagnoses have included cervical sprain/strain, lumbar disc disease, radiculopathy, tendinopathy, and knee chondromalacia. Internal medicine diagnoses have included morbid obesity, hypertension, and diabetes type 2. Treatments listed in the records include physical therapy, medications, injections, and interferential stimulation. Reports from the current treating orthopedic surgeon during 2013 and 2014 briefly mention obesity but do not discuss the obesity history, weight loss attempts, or specific indications for any recent treatments for weight loss, including Apptrim. Per the PR2 of 2/26/14, there was neck, low back, and bilateral knee pain. The problem list included diabetes and hypertension. There was no discussion of the specific treatment for these conditions, although medications were listed for these conditions. The treating orthopedic surgeon then gave an intramuscular or knee joint injection (record is contradictory) of Celestone, with no discussion of the effects on diabetes or any other condition. Apptrim was given for her weight problem, with no discussion of the specific ingredients and their indications.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Apptrim 2 capsules twice daily #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Pain, Medical Food

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain section, Medical food; Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence:
<http://nccam.nih.gov/health/weightloss>

Decision rationale: There are no physician reports which provided specific medical evidence in support of amino acid supplements for the treatment of this patient. Medical foods, per the FDA definition, are for treatment of specific dietary conditions and deficiencies. No medical reports have established any specific dietary deficiencies on an industrial or non-industrial basis. The treating physician appears to be under the impression that he is treating a nutritional deficiency, though no such condition in this patient has been established by any objective means. The MTUS does not address "medical food". The Official Disability Guidelines has several recommendations (such as liver deficiency, achlorhydria), per the citation above. This injured worker does not meet any of the indications in the Official Disability Guidelines, and the treating physician has neither defined the ingredients in Apptrim nor identified any specific indications for the amino acids in Apptrim. Apptrim is not medically necessary based on the lack of any indications in this injured worker and the recommendations of the guidelines and the FDA.