

Case Number:	CM14-0071939		
Date Assigned:	07/16/2014	Date of Injury:	11/12/2010
Decision Date:	09/12/2014	UR Denial Date:	04/22/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/19/2014

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 has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine 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 patient is a 37-year-old male with a date of injury of 11/12/2010. The listed diagnoses per [REDACTED] are; bronchiolitis obliterans (secondary to exposure to food dye at work), gout, morbid obesity, mucus hypersecretion and elevated blood glucose levels. According to progress report 03/04/2014, the patient has advanced degree of lung disease secondary to exposure to Diacetyl at work. He also has problems with massive obesity, gout, sleep apnea disorder, and gastroesophageal reflux. The patient notes recent increase in shortness of breath and cough. He is being followed by a physician at [REDACTED] for his gout. The treating physician indicates that the patient was recently treated with a course of antibiotics after developing a fever. The patient states he has had some thick mucus, which is greenish in color. The treating physician requested a Z-Pak 250 mg to be taken 2 tablets at once by mouth for 4 days, as the patient requires antibiotics for a "presumptive respiratory tract infection manifested by thick mucus secretion, discoloration of his sputum, and increasing shortness of breath." Utilization review denied the request on 04/22/2014.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Z Pak of Azithromycin: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Treatment in Worker's Compensation, Online Edition - Chapter: Pulmonary - Antibiotics.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Pain Outcomes and Endpoints Page(s): 8 of 127. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Other Medical Treatment Guideline or Medical Evidence: Drugs.com Zithromax Z-Pak (azithromycin) Azithromycin is an antibiotic that fights bacteria. Azithromycin is used to treat many different types of infections caused by bacteria, such as respiratory infections, skin infections, ear infections, and sexually transmitted diseases. Azithromycin may also be used for purposes not listed in this medication guide.

Decision rationale: The utilization review denied the request stating, "Clarification is needed regarding prior antibiotics prescribed, the dosage, frequency, and duration of treatment, and his clinical response to previous medications." The ACOEM, MTUS, and ODG Guidelines do not specifically discuss Z-Pak/azithromycin antibiotics. MTUS requires that the treating physician provide monitoring and make appropriate recommendations." The physician recommended a course of Z-Pak antibiotics as the patient presents with increase in cough, shortness of breath, and the production of thick green mucus. In this case, a round of antibiotics is reasonable and is considered medically necessary.