

Case Number:	CM14-0088343		
Date Assigned:	07/23/2014	Date of Injury:	03/18/2014
Decision Date:	08/27/2014	UR Denial Date:	06/02/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/12/2014

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 Orthopedic Surgery and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 73-year-old male who has cumulative trauma involving his right arm, right shoulder right elbow and right hand. The injured worker's diagnoses include right shoulder rotator cuff tear, and right arm over your syndrome. The treatments to date include physical therapy, and medications. The patient also had right shoulder rotator cuff repair. The injured worker continues to have chronic pain. A physical exam shows reduced range of motion of the right shoulder. There is a.c., joint tenderness; also had a positive drop arm test, Neer and Hawkins tests are positive, right off strength is 4/5, sensation is normal in the median ulnar and radial distributions. The issue on hand is whether topical gel and other medications are medically necessary.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Kera-Tek gel 4 oz.: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TOPICAL ANALGESICS Page(s): 111-113.

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:MTUS chronic pain guidelines, 2009, pages 111 -113. Topical analgesics.

Decision rationale: There is little research to support the use of topical compound. There is no medical necessity for this specific drug with the same formulation as over-the-counter products. Guidelines do not support the use of this product for patients with chronic shoulder pain. The patient is taking tramadol and the added benefit of this drug over tramadol is not established. Therefore, this medication is not medically necessary.

Compound Flurbiprofen/Cyclobenzaprine/Menthol cream: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TOPICAL ANALGESICS Page(s): 111-113.

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: MTUS: Chronic pain treatment guidelines pages 111 -113.

Decision rationale: There is little research support the use of topical nonsteroidal agents. The efficacy in clinical trials has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration. Topical NSAID's have been shown to be effective during the first 2 weeks of treatment for osteoarthritis, but not afterwards and diminishing effect over another 2 weeks. There is little evidence to utilize topical NSAID's for the treatment of osteoarthritis of the shoulder. In addition, guidelines indicate any compounded product that contains at least one drug does not recommend is not recommended. There is no evidence for the use of muscle relaxants as a topical product. Guidelines do not support the use of this compound. Therefore this medication is not medically necessary.