

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0115381		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/16/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/25/2003
<b>Decision Date:</b>	01/12/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/08/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/23/2014

### 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, 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 56 year-old patient sustained an injury on 4/25/2003 while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include Topical Compound Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 210GM and Topical compound Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm. The patient continues to treat for chronic ongoing pain symptoms to the neck, left shoulder, elbow, wrist, and low back with difficulty sleeping. Exam showed unchanged findings of cervical spine with decreased range, positive Spurling's and distraction testing; shoulder with healed incision; tenderness and restricted range with positive Neer's and supraspinatus testing; left elbow showed healed scar, tenderness, diffuse decreased range; and positive cubital tunnel and Tinel's testing; left wrist with decreased motion with positive Finkelstein's and diffuse motor 4/5 weakness. The request(s) for Topical Compound Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 210GM and Topical compound Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm were non-certified on 7/8/14 citing guidelines criteria and lack of medical necessity.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 210GM:** Upheld

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

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

**Decision rationale:** This 56 year-old patient sustained an injury on 4/25/2003 while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include Topical Compound Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 210GM and Topical compound Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm. The patient continues to treat for chronic ongoing pain symptoms to the neck, left shoulder, elbow, wrist, and low back with difficulty sleeping. Exam showed unchanged findings of cervical spine with decreased range, positive Spurling's and distraction testing; shoulder with healed incision; tenderness and restricted range with positive Neer's and supraspinatus testing; left elbow showed healed scar, tenderness, diffuse decreased range; and positive cubital tunnel and Tinel's testing; left wrist with decreased motion with positive Finkelstein's and diffuse motor 4/5 weakness. The request(s) for Topical Compound Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 210GM and Topical compound Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm were non-certified on 7/8/14. Per MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines, the efficacy in clinical trials for topical analgesic treatment modality has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration. These medications may be useful for chronic musculoskeletal pain, but there are no long-term studies of their effectiveness or safety. There is little evidence to utilize topical compound analgesic over oral NSAIDs or other pain relievers for a patient with spinal and multiple joint pain without contraindication in taking oral medications. Submitted reports have not adequately demonstrated the indication or medical need for this topical analgesic to include a compounded opioid over oral formulation for this chronic injury of 2003 without documented functional improvement from treatment already rendered. Guidelines do not recommend long-term use of this muscle relaxant and opioid for this chronic injury without improved functional outcomes attributable to their use. The Cyclobenzaprine 10% Tramadol 10%, 15gm and 60gm topical cream is not medically necessary and appropriate.

**Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm:** Upheld

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

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

**Decision rationale:** This 56 year-old patient sustained an injury on 4/25/2003 while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include Topical Compound Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 210GM and Topical compound Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm. The patient continues to treat for chronic ongoing pain symptoms to the neck, left shoulder, elbow, wrist, and low back with difficulty sleeping. Exam showed unchanged findings of cervical spine with decreased range, positive Spurling's and distraction testing; shoulder with healed incision; tenderness and restricted range with positive Neer's and supraspinatus testing; left elbow showed healed scar, tenderness, diffuse decreased range; and positive cubital tunnel and Tinel's testing;

left wrist with decreased motion with positive Finkelstein's and diffuse motor 4/5 weakness. The request(s) for Topical Compound Capsaicin 0.025%, Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, Menthol 2%, Camphor 2%, 210GM and Topical compound Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm were non-certified on 7/8/14. Per MTUS Chronic Pain Guidelines, the efficacy in clinical trials for topical analgesic treatment modality has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration. These medications may be useful for chronic musculoskeletal pain, but there are no long-term studies of their effectiveness or safety. There is little evidence to utilize topical compound analgesic over oral NSAIDs or other pain relievers for a patient with spinal and multiple joint pain without contraindication in taking oral medications. Submitted reports have not adequately demonstrated the indication or medical need for this topical analgesic for this chronic injury of 2003 without documented functional improvement from treatment already rendered. It is also unclear why the patient is being prescribed 2 concurrent opioid of topical Tramadol posing an increase risk profile without demonstrated extenuating circumstances and indication. The Topical compound Flurbiprofen 20%, Tramadol 15%, 210gm is not medically necessary and appropriate.