

Case Number:	CM14-0181664		
Date Assigned:	11/06/2014	Date of Injury:	01/08/2010
Decision Date:	01/16/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/27/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/31/2014

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 Anesthesia, has a subspecialty in Acupuncture & Pain 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:

56 years old female injured worker with date of injury 1/8/10 with related lumbar pain. Per progress report dated 10/17/14, the injured worker complained of chronic lumbar pain with constant aching and throbbing and numbness in her left leg. Without medication she rated her pain level 10/10 and with medication, 6/10. Per physical exam, there was slight left sided limping, diffuse tenderness and tightness over the lumbosacral region, decreased range of motion, positive straight leg raise, motor function 3+/5 in the left lower extremity due to pain and weakness, 5/5 strength on the right, DTRs 1+ bilaterally. Treatment to date has included lumbar discectomy at L5-S1 1/2012, epidural injection, physical therapy, and medication management. The date of UR decision was 10/27/14.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Ibuprofen 600mg (Quantity unknown): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs Page(s): 67-68.

Decision rationale: With regard to the use of NSAIDs for chronic low back pain, the MTUS CPMTG states "Recommended as an option for short-term symptomatic relief. A Cochrane review of the literature on drug relief for low back pain (LBP) suggested that NSAIDs were no more effective than other drugs such as acetaminophen, narcotic analgesics, and muscle relaxants. The review also found that NSAIDs had more adverse effects than placebo and acetaminophen but fewer effects than muscle relaxants and narcotic analgesics. In addition, evidence from the review suggested that no one NSAID, including COX-2 inhibitors, was clearly more effective than another." "Low back pain (chronic): Both acetaminophen and NSAIDs have been recommended as first line therapy for low back pain. There is insufficient evidence to recommend one medication over the other. Selection should be made on a case-by-case basis based on weighing efficacy vs. side effect profile."The request is indicated for the injured worker's low back pain, however, without quantity information, medical necessity cannot be affirmed.