

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0189850		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	11/21/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/31/2012
<b>Decision Date:</b>	01/26/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	10/21/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	11/13/2014

### 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 Family Practice, and is licensed to practice in North Carolina. 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 has a reported date of injury of 05/31/2011 through 05/31/2012 and 10/07/2009. The patient has the diagnoses of degenerative disc disease T4-5 and T9/10, compression fractures T5-8 and low back pain. Per the most recent progress notes provided for review from the primary treating physician dated 09/16/2014, the patient had complaints of thoracic pain rated a 6/10 and low back pain radiating to the left hip/thigh rated a 5/10/ The physical exam noted thoracic tenderness and lumbar tenderness and lumbar limited range of motion and spasm. Treatment plan recommendations included thoracic spine physical therapy, continue LSO brace, continue TENS and continuation of pain medications.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Cyclobenzaprine 7.5mg #90, one PO TID pm spasm:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle Relaxants Page(s): 63-64.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines muscle relaxants Page(s): 63-65.

**Decision rationale:** The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on muscle relaxants states: Recommend non-sedating muscle relaxants with caution as a second-line option

for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations in patients with chronic LBP. (Chou, 2007) (Mens, 2005) (Van Tulder, 1998) (van Tulder, 2003) (van Tulder, 2006) (Schnitzer, 2004) (See, 2008) Muscle relaxants may be effective in reducing pain and muscle tension, and increasing mobility. However, in most LBP cases, they show no benefit beyond NSAIDs in pain and overall improvement. Also there is no additional benefit shown in combination with NSAIDs. Efficacy appears to diminish over time, and prolonged use of some medications in this class may lead to dependence. (Homik, 2004) Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril , Amrix , Fexmid, generic available): Recommended for a short course of therapy. Limited, mixed-evidence does not allow for a recommendation for chronic use. Cyclobenzaprine is a skeletal muscle relaxant and a central nervous system depressant with similar effects to tricyclic antidepressants (e.g. amitriptyline). This medication is not intended for long-term use per the California MTUS. The medication has not been prescribed for the flare-up of chronic low back pain. This is not an approved use for the medication. For these reasons, criteria for the use of this medication have not been met. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.