

Case Number:	CM14-0191706		
Date Assigned:	11/25/2014	Date of Injury:	08/20/2013
Decision Date:	01/12/2015	UR Denial Date:	10/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/17/2014

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 & 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 patient sustained an injury on 8/20/13 while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include Tizanidine Hcl 2mg #90. Diagnoses include cervical myoligamentous strain with radicular symptoms into the left arm, rule out HNP. Conservative care has included medications, therapy, and modified activities/rest. The patient continues to treat for chronic pain symptoms. Report of 10/3/14 from the provider noted the patient with neck and arm pain. Exam showed unchanged tenderness over the neck and shoulder girdle; spasm of cervical paraspinal muscles and left upper trapezius; decreased range of motion; diffuse weakness of left arm at 4/5. Treatment plan included medication refills of Zanaflex and Tramadol. The patient remained TTD. The request(s) for Tizanidine Hcl 2mg #90 was non-certified on 10/24/14 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:

TIZANIDINE HCL 2MG #90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines MUSCLE RELAXANT.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle Relaxants Page(s): 128.

Decision rationale: This patient sustained an injury on 8/20/13 while employed by [REDACTED]. Request(s) under consideration include Tizanidine Hcl 2mg #90. Diagnoses include cervical myoligamentous strain with radicular symptoms into the left arm, rule out HNP. Conservative care has included medications, therapy, and modified activities/rest. The patient continues to treat for chronic pain symptoms. Report of 10/3/14 from the provider noted the patient with neck and arm pain. Exam showed unchanged tenderness over the neck and shoulder girdle; spasm of cervical paraspinal muscles and left upper trapezius; decreased range of motion; diffuse weakness of left arm at 4/5. Treatment plan included medication refills of Zanaflex and Tramadol. The patient remained TTD. The request(s) for Tizanidine Hcl 2mg #90 was non-certified on 10/24/14. Guidelines do not recommend long-term use of this muscle relaxant for this chronic injury of 2013. Additionally, the efficacy in clinical trials 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. Submitted reports have not adequately demonstrated the indication or medical need for this treatment and there is no report of significant clinical findings, acute flare-up or new injury to support for its long-term use. There is no report of functional improvement resulting from its previous treatment to support further use as the patient remains not working. The Tizanidine Hcl 2mg #90 is not medically necessary and appropriate.