

Case Number:	CM14-0192337		
Date Assigned:	11/26/2014	Date of Injury:	11/22/2011
Decision Date:	01/23/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/10/2014
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 Rehab, has a subspecialty in 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:

This is a patient with a date of injury of November 22, 2011. A utilization review determination dated November 10, 2014 recommends noncertification of Norco and Prilosec. A progress report dated June 3, 2014 identifies subjective complaints of low back pain radiating into the lower extremities. The note indicates that Celebrex has been working well but is irritating his stomach. Current medications include Celebrex 200 mg once a day and Prilosec 20 mg once a day. Objective findings state "no significant change." Diagnoses include spondylolisthesis, spondylosis, and possible lumbar instability. The treatment plan recommends Prilosec to use with Celebrex. The note states that Celebrex every other day or so has been working quite well in controlling his symptoms. The patient has been able to work full time and stay functional. A progress report dated October 21, 2014 states that the patient continues to have persistent low back pain radiating into the lower extremities. He is trying to get back to exercising and has tried yoga which flared things up. He has been using Norco after work which has been helpful with pain. At work he is not able to use it as it makes him feel drowsy. The patient uses Norco on a sporadic basis one or 2 per day or less. Physical examination findings identify "no significant change." The treatment plan recommends Norco, Prilosec, updated MRI, and discussion regarding exercise regimen. A progress report dated September 23, 2014 states that he is having a hard time continuing to work and his pain level has increased and is 6/10 on average. He is wondering if he can have something that he can use on a sporadic basis for his severe pain. Physical examination reveals positive straight leg raise bilaterally with good strength in bilateral lower extremities. The treatment plan recommended giving the patient Norco #60 use on a sporadic basis.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Prilosec 20mg, #30: Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ODG

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 68-69. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain Chapter, Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for omeprazole (Prilosec), California MTUS states that proton pump inhibitors are appropriate for the treatment of dyspepsia secondary to NSAID therapy or for patients at risk for gastrointestinal events with NSAID use. Within the documentation available for review, it does appear that the patient is having stomach irritation from anti-inflammatory medication. As such, the currently requested omeprazole (Prilosec) is medically necessary.