

Case Number:	CM14-0195284		
Date Assigned:	12/03/2014	Date of Injury:	12/12/2012
Decision Date:	01/15/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/14/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/21/2014

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 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 injured worker's date of injury is 12/12/2012. This patient receives treatment for chronic low back and right shoulder pain. A lumbar MRI showed some mild facet joint degeneration and a right shoulder MRI showed biceps tendinopathy and a small SLAP tear. The clinical diagnoses include: lumbar facet pain, sacroiliitis, and right rotator cuff tendinitis. The patient received physical therapy, including TENS therapy. This review covers three medications.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 5/325MG #30, Per 11/06/14: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 78-80.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids for chronic pain Page(s): 80-82.

Decision rationale: This patient receives treatment for chronic shoulder and chronic low back pain. Opioids can be helpful to treat pain, as long as they are limited to the management of exacerbations of chronic pain. When used over the long term, hyperalgesia, dependence, and tolerance develop. Addiction and aberrant drug related behavior ought to be surveilled and documented. The documentation ought to include an assessment of return to function. The

medical documentation does not adequately address these issues. Norco is not medically indicated.

Tramadol 50mg #60, Per 11/06/14: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 93-94.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids for chronic pain Page(s): 80-82.

Decision rationale: Tramadol is a weak opioid. This patient receives treatment for chronic shoulder and chronic low back pain. Opioids can be helpful to treat pain as long as they are limited to the management of exacerbations of chronic pain. When used over the long term, hyperalgesia, dependence, and tolerance develop. Addiction and aberrant drug related behavior ought to be surveilled and documented. The documentation ought to include an assessment of return to function. The medical documentation does not adequately address these issues. Tramadol is not medically indicated.

Omeprazole 20mg #30, Per 11/06/14 Form: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs GI Symptoms and Cardiovascular Risk Page(s): 67-68.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs, GI symptoms & cardiovascular risk Page(s): 68-70.

Decision rationale: Omeprazole is a proton pump inhibitor, which may be medically indicated to treat peptic ulcer disease or to prevent GI bleeding in patients who exhibit this complication while taking NSAIDs. There is no documentation about this problem with NSAIDs. Omeprazole is not medically indicated.