

Case Number:	CM14-0196327		
Date Assigned:	12/04/2014	Date of Injury:	12/29/2013
Decision Date:	01/15/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/04/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/24/2014

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 Internal Medicine, has a subspecialty in Rheumatology and is licensed to practice in Maryland. 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 is a 59 year old male with date of injury 12/29/13. The mechanism of injury is stated as a crush injury to the bilateral lower extremities. The patient has complained of right foot, right ankle and left knee pain since the date of injury. He has been treated with physical therapy and medications. There are no radiographic reports included for review. Objective: right first metatarsophalangeal (mtp): swelling, decreased and painful range of motion, decreased sensation of the right foot lateral and plantar surfaces; left knee: positive patellofemoral grind test. Diagnoses: crush injury right foot, degenerative joint disease right first metatarsophalangeal joint, left knee pain. Treatment plan and request: Norco.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 10/325mg #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 77.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, criteria for use Page(s): 76-85, 88-89.

Decision rationale: Injured worker has complained of right foot, right ankle and left knee pain since date of injury 12/29/13. He has been treated with physical therapy and medications to

include opioids since at least 01/2014. The current request is for Norco. No treating physician reports adequately assess the patient with respect to function, specific benefit, return to work, signs of abuse or treatment alternatives other than opioids. There is no evidence that the treating physician is prescribing opioids according to the MTUS section cited above which recommends prescribing according to function, with specific functional goals, return to work, random drug testing, opioid contract and documentation of failure of prior non-opioid therapy. On the basis of this lack of documentation and failure to adhere to the MTUS guidelines, Norco is not indicated as medically necessary.