

Case Number:	CM14-0202709		
Date Assigned:	12/15/2014	Date of Injury:	01/18/2006
Decision Date:	01/30/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/19/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/04/2014

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, and is licensed to practice in New York. 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 injured worker is a 55 year old male who suffered a work related injury on 01/18/06. He continues to suffer with low back pain per the physician notes from 10/20/14. He noted 50% pain relief from an LESI on 07/08/14. He is working full duty with the help of his injection, H-wave, medications, and inversion table. His medication regimen included Norco, naproxen, flexeril, and trazodone. He complains of low back. His radicular pain has improved since the LESI. Recommended treatments include chiropractic treatment and a topical compound for neuropathic pain. The requested treatment is the topical compound. This request was denied by the Claims Administrator on 11/19/14 and was subsequently appealed for Independent Medical Review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Topical Compound Cream 120 Gram, Apply 1-2 Gram TID-QID with 3 Refills (Contains: Bupivacaine 1 Percent, Diclofenac 3 Percent, DMSO 4 Percent, Doxepin 3 Percent, Gabapentin 6 Percent, Orphenadrine 5 Percent, Pentoxifylline 3 Percent): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

Decision rationale: There is no documentation provided necessitating use of the requested topical medication. Per California MTUS Guidelines topical analgesics are primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. These agents are applied topically to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, Capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, Glutamate receptor antagonists, Alpha-adrenergic receptor agonist, Adenosine, Cannabinoids, Cholinergic receptor agonists, γ agonists, Prostanoids, Bradykinin, Adenosine Triphosphate, Biogenic Amines, and nerve growth factor) Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. In this case Gabapentin, Doxepin, Orphenadrine and Pentoxifylline are not FDA approved for a topical application and Diclofenac is a topical NSAID that has been shown in a meta-analysis to be superior to placebo during the first two weeks of treatment for osteoarthritis but either not afterward, or with diminishing effect over another two-week period. Medical necessity for the requested item has not been established. The requested Topical Compound Cream: Bupivacaine 1 Percent, Diclofenac 3 Percent, DMSO 4 Percent, Doxepin 3 Percent, Gabapentin 6 Percent, Orphenadrine 5 Percent, Pentoxifylline 3 Percent, 120 Gram is not medically necessary.