

Case Number:	CM14-0206582		
Date Assigned:	12/18/2014	Date of Injury:	10/25/2010
Decision Date:	02/12/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/10/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/10/2014

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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Medicine, Hospice and Palliative Care 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 41 y/o Male who had industrial injury on 10/25/10. Injured worker has seen multiple different specialists since the time of injury. He has obtained physical therapy, acupuncture, x-rays, lumbar support, MRI scans, epidurals, and medications. On 11/7/14 a non certification recommendation was made for a request of zanaflex 4mg #90. The reviewing physician states on a report dated 10/27/14 that the injured worker stated the tramadol and tizanidine bother his stomach. The rationale for the denial was due to continued and long-term use of a muscle relaxant not being supported by guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Zanaflex: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle Relaxants.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 63-66.

Decision rationale: Regarding the request for tizanidine (Zanaflex), Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines support the use of nonsedating muscle relaxants to be used with caution as

a 2nd line option for the short-term treatment of acute exacerbations of pain. Guidelines go on to state that tizanidine specifically is FDA approved for management of spasticity; unlabeled use for low back pain. Guidelines recommend Liver function tests (LFT) monitoring at baseline, 1, 3, and 6 months. Within the documentation available for review, there is no identification of a specific analgesic benefit or objective functional improvement as a result of the tizanidine. Additionally, it does not appear that this medication is being prescribed for the short-term treatment of an acute exacerbation, as recommended by guidelines. Finally, it does not appear that there has been appropriate liver function testing, as recommended by guidelines. In the absence of such documentation, the currently requested tizanidine (Zanaflex) is not medically necessary.