

Case Number:	CM14-0208463		
Date Assigned:	12/19/2014	Date of Injury:	12/23/2010
Decision Date:	02/10/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/12/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/11/2014

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 Practice, 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 58-year-old female claimant who sustained a work injury on December 23, 2010 involving the neck. She was diagnosed with cervical radiculopathy, neck strain and myofascial pain. A progress note on August 28, 2014 indicated the claimant had 6- 8/10 pain. Exam findings were notable for pain and tenderness in the cervical spine and trigger points in the trapezial area. She was continuing physical therapy and home exercises. The treating physician continued the claimant on Norco, Lyrica, Tizanidine and ordered a urine toxicology screen. She had been on the medications for several months with similar pain levels and exam findings.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Urine toxicology screen QTY: 1.00: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Urine Toxicology Page(s): 94-95.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Urine Toxicology Page(s): 82-92.

Decision rationale: According to the California MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, urine toxicology screen is used to assess presence of illicit drugs or to monitor adherence to prescription medication program. There's no documentation from the provider to suggest that

there was illicit drug use or noncompliance. There were no prior urine drug screen results that indicated noncompliance, substance-abuse or other inappropriate activity. Based on the above references and clinical history, a urine toxicology screen is not medically necessary.

Norco 10/325mg QTY: 90.00: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 91.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines opioids Page(s): 82-92.

Decision rationale: Norco is a short acting opioid used for breakthrough pain. According to the MTUS guidelines, it is not indicated as 1st line therapy for neuropathic pain, and chronic back pain . It is not indicated for mechanical or compressive etiologies. It is recommended for a trial basis for short-term use. Long Term-use has not been supported by any trials. In this case, the claimant had been on Norco for several months without significant improvement in pain or function. The continued use of Norco is not medically necessary.

Lyrica 50mg QTY: 90.00: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 19-20, 99.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Lyrica Page(s): 19.

Decision rationale: According to the guidelines, Lyrica is effective and approved for diabetic neuropathy and post-herpetic neuralgia. In this case, the claimant has neither diagnoses. The claimant had been on Lyrica along with other analgesics. There is no indication for continued use and the Lyrica is not medically necessary.