

Case Number:	CM14-0218392		
Date Assigned:	01/08/2015	Date of Injury:	08/28/2014
Decision Date:	04/21/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/05/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/30/2014

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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:
 State(s) of Licensure: Arizona, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

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 57 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 8/28/14. She has reported injury to bilateral hands and has been diagnosed with shoulder impingement (bilateral), lateral epicondylitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, and ganglion and cyst of synovium, tendon and bursa (bilateral). Treatment has included medications. On 11/20/14, the injured worker had bilateral hand pain described as throbbing pain with swelling. The treatment request included naproxen sodium, omeprazole, and tramadol.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Naproxen sodium 550 mg, thirty count: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs) Section.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs Page(s): 67.

Decision rationale: According to the guidelines, NSAIDs are recommended as a second-line treatment after acetaminophen. Acetaminophen may be considered for initial therapy for patients with mild to moderate pain. NSAIDs are recommended as an option for short-term symptomatic relief. In this case, the claimant had been on NSAIDs for an unspecified time but likely few months. There was no indication of Tylenol failure. Long-term NSAID use has renal and GI risks. The pain was noted to be unrelenting. Continued use of Naproxen is not medically necessary.

Omeprazole DR 20 mg, thirty count with two refills: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDS Page(s): 68-69.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS guidelines, Omeprazole is a proton pump inhibitor that is to be used with NSAIDs for those with high risk of GI events such as bleeding, perforation, and concurrent anticoagulation/anti-platelet use. In this case, there is no documentation of GI events or antiplatelet use that would place the claimant at risk. Therefore, the continued use of Omeprazole is not medically necessary.

Tramadol HCL 50 mg, sixty count with two refills: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Tramadol Page(s): 92-93.

Decision rationale: Tramadol is a synthetic opioid affecting the central nervous system. According to the MTUS guidelines, Tramadol is recommended on a trial basis for short-term use after there has been evidence of failure of first-line non-pharmacologic and medication options (such as acetaminophen or NSAIDs) and when there is evidence of moderate to severe pain. In this case, the claimant's pain was not improving while on the medication. The claimant had been on the Tramadol in combination with Naproxen for a few months. Pain scores or opioid agreement were not noted. Continued use of Tramadol is not medically necessary.