

Case Number:	CM15-0002660		
Date Assigned:	01/13/2015	Date of Injury:	07/05/2013
Decision Date:	03/09/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/09/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/06/2015

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 male who sustained a work related injury on July 5, 2013, after pulling a 30 foot scaffold. Immediately, he felt a sharp pain in his back radiating to the right leg. He was diagnosed with a lumbar sprain and sciatica. Treatment included pain medication, physical therapy, modalities, back support and chiropractic treatments. In August, 2013, he complained of persistent pain and was diagnosed with a lumbar disc protrusion, degenerative disc disease and sacroilitis. He received trigger point injections and continued chiropractic treatment and pain medications. In December 2013, he had severe localized low back pain radiating to mid back. He continued on anti-inflammatory medication, Neurontin for nerve pain and Prilosec for upset stomach and steroid injections to help relieve the pain. A note in December 2014 indicated the Neurontin helped with the tingling and numbness. On January 20, 2015, Utilization Review modified the prescription of Neurontin 600 milligrams #120 to Neurontin 600 milligrams #92 and denied the request for Prilosec 20 milligrams #60, per The California Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Prescription of Neurontin 600mg, #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Gabapentin (Neurontin).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Anti-epileptics and Neurontin Page(s): 18.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS guidelines: Gabapentin (Neurontin) has been shown to be effective for treatment of diabetic painful neuropathy and postherpetic neuralgia and has been considered as a first-line treatment for neuropathic pain. It is recommended for a trial in those with spinal stenosis. In this case, the claimant does not have the stated conditions approved for Neurontin use. Although it may provide symptomatic relief of numbness, the Neurontin is not considered medically necessary based on the guidelines recommendations.

Prescription of Prilosec 20mg, #60: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs, GI symptoms and cardiovascular risk.

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

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS guidelines, Prilosec 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. It was only used for GI upset. Therefore, the continued use of Prilosec is not medically necessary.