

Case Number:	CM15-0004414		
Date Assigned:	01/15/2015	Date of Injury:	05/19/2014
Decision Date:	03/17/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/10/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/08/2015

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: North Carolina

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 61 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on May 19, 2014. She has reported a low back injury. The diagnoses have included lumbar sprain and strain, thoracic/lumbosacral neuritis/radiculitis, and congenital spondylolisthesis. Treatment to date has included medications. Currently, the IW complains of low back pain and stiffness that is exacerbated by prolonged sitting, walking, or standing. On November 13, 2014, the physical findings are noted to be tenderness of the lower lumbar area; forward flexion is 45 degrees, extension 10 degrees, and lateral bending 30 degrees. On December 10, 2014, Utilization Review non-certified LF520 (Lidocaine 5%, Flubiprofen 20%) applied twice daily to three times daily, as needed for acute exacerbations, 120 grams, with two refills, based on MTUS, Chronic Pain Medical Treatment guidelines. On January 8, 2015, the injured worker submitted an application for IMR for review of LF520 (Lidocaine 5%, Flubiprofen 20%) applied twice daily to three times daily, as needed for acute exacerbations, 120 grams, with two refills.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lidocaine 5% Flurbiprofen 20% ap bid to tid prn acute exacerbations 120 grams with 2 refills: Upheld

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

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

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on topical analgesics states: Recommended as an option as indicated below. Largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. (Namaka, 2004) These agents are applied locally to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. (Colombo, 2006) Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, adrenergic receptor agonist, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor). (Argoff, 2006) There is little to no research to support the use of many of these agents. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. The requested medication contains an NSAID compound which is not recommended per the California MTUS, also topical Lidocaine is not recommended in this formulation. Therefore, the request is not certified.