

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0005702		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	01/26/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/27/2001
<b>Decision Date:</b>	03/19/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/08/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	01/12/2015

### 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: California  
Certification(s)/Specialty: Emergency Medicine

### 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 73 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 11/27/2001. The diagnoses have included sciatica, lumbago, cervical region post-laminectomy syndrome, cervicgia, joint pain, lumbosacral radiculitis, depressive disorder, and lumbar region post-laminectomy region. Treatment to date has included surgical interventions and conservative treatments. Currently, the injured worker complains of sciatica, joint pain, and low back and neck pain. She was in no acute distress and had a euthymic mood. The PR2, dated 12/22/2014, did not describe a detailed physical examination. The progress report, dated 11/11/2014, noted current medications as including Baclofen, Duloxetine, Effexor XR, Norco 10/325mg, Aspirin, and Probiotic. Non-pain medications from other providers were reported as Flexaryl, Simvastatin, and Doxylamine Succinate. On 1/08/2015, Utilization Review non-certified a request for the prospective usage of Norco 10/325mg #30, citing the MTUS 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:

**Prospective Usage of Norco 10/325mg #30:** Upheld

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

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, On-Going Management, Opioids for Chronic Pain Page(s): 78-82.

**Decision rationale:** The requested Norco 10/325mg #30 is not medically necessary. CA MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, Opioids, On-Going Management, Pages 78-80, Opioids for Chronic Pain, Pages 80-82, recommend continued use of this opiate for the treatment of moderate to severe pain, with documented objective evidence of derived functional benefit, as well as documented opiate surveillance measures. The injured worker has complaints of sciatica, joint pain, and low back and neck pain. The treating physician has not documented VAS pain quantification with and without medications, duration of treatment, objective evidence of derived functional benefit such as improvements in activities of daily living or reduced work restrictions or decreased reliance on medical intervention, nor measures of opiate surveillance including an executed narcotic pain contract or urine drug screening. The criteria noted above not having been met, Norco 10/325mg #30 is not medically necessary.