

Case Number:	CM15-0104925		
Date Assigned:	06/09/2015	Date of Injury:	09/03/1992
Decision Date:	07/10/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/14/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/01/2015

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 54 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on September 3, 1992. She reported slipping and falling on her back with back pain. The injured worker was diagnosed as having neck pain, lumbar post-laminectomy syndrome, pain in thoracic spine, and tension headache. Treatment to date has included hot baths, and lumbar surgeries, left shoulder surgery, epidural steroid injection (ESI), physical medicine modalities, MRIs, and medication. Currently, the injured worker complains of chronic low back and neck pain. The Treating Physician's report dated April 6, 2015, noted the injured worker reported her back pain had increased over the last month with constant low back pain with intermittent radiation of numbness and tingling down the bilateral lower extremities. The injured worker reported a headache for the previous eight days, having tried Zolmitriptan, continuing to have a headache. The injured worker reported taking Buprenorphine, not really providing pain relief, with Lidoderm patches at bedtime improving her pain enough to allow her to sleep comfortably. Physical examination was noted to show the injured worker with an antalgic gait, with normal muscle tone without atrophy in bilateral upper and lower extremities. The injured worker's current medications were listed as Lidoderm patches, Buprenorphine sublingual troches, Albuterol, Claritin, Clonazepam, Spironolactone, Topiramate, Xarelto, and Zolmitriptan. The treatment plan was noted to include a request for authorization for the injured worker's current medications with increase of the Buprenorphine, and extension of the authorization for six physical therapy visits which expired April 30, 2015.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lidoderm 5% patches, Qty 90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Lidoderm (lidocaine patch).

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 lidocaine states: Lidocaine Indication: Neuropathic pain Recommended for localized peripheral pain after there has been evidence of a trial of first-line therapy (tri-cyclic or SNRI anti-depressants or an AED such as gabapentin or Lyrica). Topical lidocaine, in the formulation of a dermal patch (Lidoderm) has been designated for orphan status by the FDA for neuropathic pain. Lidoderm is also used off-label for diabetic neuropathy. No other commercially approved topical formulations of lidocaine (whether creams, lotions or gels) are indicated for neuropathic pain. Non-dermal patch formulations are generally indicated as local anesthetics and anti-pruritics. Further research is needed to recommend this treatment for chronic neuropathic pain disorders other than post-herpetic neuralgia. Formulations that do not involve a dermal-patch system are generally indicated as local anesthetics and anti-pruritics. In February 2007 the FDA notified consumers and healthcare professionals of the potential hazards of the use of topical lidocaine. Those at particular risk were individuals that applied large amounts of this substance over large areas, left the products on for long periods of time, or used the agent with occlusive dressings. Systemic exposure was highly variable among patients. Only FDA-approved products are currently recommended. (Argoff, 2006) (Dworkin, 2007) (Khaliq-Cochrane, 2007) (Knotkova, 2007) (Lexi-Comp, 2008). Non-neuropathic pain: Not recommended. There is only one trial that tested 4% lidocaine for treatment of chronic muscle pain. The results showed there was no superiority over placebo. (Scudds, 1995) This medication is recommended for localized peripheral pain. The patient has no documented failure of all first line agents indicated for the treatment of neuropathic pain as outlined above. Therefore criteria as set forth by the California MTUS as outlined above have not been met and the request is not medically necessary.