

Case Number:	CM15-0109483		
Date Assigned:	07/21/2015	Date of Injury:	05/22/1998
Decision Date:	08/17/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/28/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/08/2015

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 51-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 05/22/1998. Mechanism of injury was continuous trauma. Diagnoses include bilateral ulnar entrapment and right carpal tunnel syndrome secondary to trauma sustained continuously through May of 1998, and thoracic outlet syndrome. Treatment to date has included diagnostic studies, therapy, Botox denervation to the lumbar spine, status post C5-6 anterior cervical discectomy and fusion, wrist braces, left rib resection, and physical therapy. His medications include Zanaflex, Temazepam and Wellbutrin. A physician progress note dated 05/04/2015 documents the injured worker complains of constant neck and shoulder pain. Several documents within the submitted medical records are difficult to decipher. The injured worker complains of fatigue, sleepiness, and insomnia. He has muscle and joint pain. He has headaches, and he suffers from hearing loss and ringing in his ears. His vision has spots and blurring. He complains of heartburn and constipation. He has disabling pain. He has hand or arm aches or fatigues with arm exercise, particularly with overhead or outstretched positioning. He has sensations of tingling or numbness in the hand and arm. He has pain in his head, neck shoulders, both hands and knees and ankles. Treatment requested is for Temazepam 30mg #30 with 3 refills, and Zanaflex 4mg #60 with 3 refills.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Zanaflex 4mg #60 with 3 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle Relaxants (for pain).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines muscle relaxants Page(s): 63-65.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on muscle relaxants states: Recommend non-sedating muscle relaxants with caution as a second-line option for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations in patients with chronic LBP. (Chou, 2007) (Mens, 2005) (Van Tulder, 1998) (van Tulder, 2003) (van Tulder, 2006) (Schnitzer, 2004) (See, 2008) Muscle relaxants may be effective in reducing pain and muscle tension, and increasing mobility. However, in most LBP cases, they show no benefit beyond NSAIDs in pain and overall improvement. In addition, there is no additional benefit shown in combination with NSAIDs. Efficacy appears to diminish over time, and prolonged use of some medications in this class may lead to dependence. (Homik, 2004) (Chou, 2004) This medication is not intended for long-term use per the California MTUS. The medication has not been prescribed for the flare-up of chronic low back pain. This is not an approved use for the medication. For these reasons, criteria for the use of this medication have not been met. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.

Temazepam 30mg #30 with 3 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain (Chronic): Benzodiazepines. (2015).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines benzodiazepines Page(s): 24.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on benzodiazepines states: Benzodiazepines Not recommended for long-term use because long-term efficacy is unproven and there is a risk of dependence. Most guidelines limit use to 4 weeks. Their range of action includes sedative/hypnotic, anxiolytic, anticonvulsant, and muscle relaxant. Chronic benzodiazepines are the treatment of choice in very few conditions. Tolerance to hypnotic effects develops rapidly. Tolerance to anxiolytic effects occurs within months and long-term use may actually increase anxiety. A more appropriate treatment for anxiety disorder is an antidepressant. Tolerance to anticonvulsant and muscle relaxant effects occurs within weeks. (Baillargeon, 2003) (Ashton, 2005). The chronic long-term use of this class of medication is recommended in very few conditions per the California MTUS. There is no evidence however of all failure of first line agent for the treatment of anxiety or insomnia in the provided documentation. For this reason, the request is not medically necessary.

