

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0143764		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/04/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	01/30/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	08/31/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/16/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/24/2015

### 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:

This is a 59-year-old male with a January 30, 2013 date of injury. A progress note dated July 6, 2015 documents subjective complaints (ongoing lower back pain), objective findings (ongoing tenderness to lumbar paraspinal muscles), and current diagnoses (persistent lower back pain and lower extremity pain, rule out lumbar disc herniation; chronic neck and upper extremity symptoms; atrophy of the intrinsic hand muscles; chronic myofascial pain). Treatments to date have included medications, exercise, imaging studies, diagnostic testing, and activity modifications. The medical record indicates that medications help control the pain, but the injured worker would like to try something that would be a little more helpful, like Voltaren. The treating physician documented a plan of care that included Voltaren 100mg #30 with two refills.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Voltaren 100mg #30 with 2 refills:** Overturned

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAID Page(s): 66-68.

**Decision rationale:** The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on NSAID therapy states: Recommended at the lowest dose for the shortest period in patients with moderate to severe pain. Acetaminophen may be considered for initial therapy for patients with mild to moderate pain, and in particular, for those with gastrointestinal, cardiovascular or renovascular risk factors. NSAIDs appear to be superior to acetaminophen, particularly for patients with moderate to severe pain. There is no evidence to recommend one drug in this class over another based on efficacy. In particular, there appears to be no difference between traditional NSAIDs and COX-2 NSAIDs in terms of pain relief. The main concern of selection is based on adverse effects. COX-2 NSAIDs have fewer GI side effects at the risk of increased cardiovascular side effects, although the FDA has concluded that long-term clinical trials are best interpreted to suggest that cardiovascular risk occurs with all NSAIDs and is a class effect (with naproxyn being the safest drug). There is no evidence of long-term effectiveness for pain or function. (Chen, 2008) (Laine, 2008) Back Pain - Chronic low back pain: Recommended as an option for short-term symptomatic relief. A Cochrane review of the literature on drug relief for low back pain (LBP) suggested that NSAIDs were no more effective than other drugs such as acetaminophen, narcotic analgesics, and muscle relaxants. The review also found that NSAIDs had more adverse effects than placebo and acetaminophen but fewer effects than muscle relaxants and narcotic analgesics. In addition, evidence from the review suggested that no one NSAID, including COX-2 inhibitors, was clearly more effective than another. (Roelofs-Cochrane, 2008) See also Anti-inflammatory medications. Neuropathic pain: There is inconsistent evidence for the use of these medications to treat long term neuropathic pain, but they may be useful to treat breakthrough and mixed pain conditions such as osteoarthritis (and other nociceptive pain) in with neuropathic pain. This medication is recommended for the shortest period of time and at the lowest dose possible. The dosing of this medication is within the California MTUS guideline recommendations. The definition of shortest period possible is not clearly defined in the California MTUS. Therefore, the request is medically necessary.