

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0168523		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	09/09/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	10/29/2007
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/14/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/27/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	08/27/2015

### 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 44 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on October 29, 2007. The initial symptoms reported are unknown. The injured worker was currently diagnosed as having anxiety, chronic spinal fusion, chronic pain due to trauma, chronic neck pain, chronic depression, muscle spasms, COAT, myalgia and myositis unspecified, chronic headache and chronic insomnia. Treatment to date has included medication and heat. On July 24, 2015, the injured worker complained of severe, constant neck pain that had worsened. He rated the pain as a 9 on a 1-10 pain scale without medications and as a 7 on the pain scale with medications. The pain was described as deep, aching, stabbing, discomforting, piercing, sharp, shooting, throbbing and numbness. Activity was noted to aggravate the pain. Relieving factors included medication and rest. Specifically, his tizanidine medication was noted to reduce his muscle spasms, tension and related pain, allowing him to get up and do chores more easily. The treatment plan included medication and a follow-up visit. On July 27, 2015, utilization review denied a request for tizanidine (Zanaflex) 4mg #90.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Tizanidine (Zanaflex) 4mg #90:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle relaxants (for pain) Page(s): 63-66. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Pain Procedure Summary.

**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. Also, 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.