

Case Number:	CM15-0182747		
Date Assigned:	10/01/2015	Date of Injury:	08/09/2006
Decision Date:	11/09/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/24/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/17/2015

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 33 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on August 9, 2006, incurring low back injuries. He was diagnosed with lumbar degenerative disc disease and disc protrusions. Treatment included physical therapy, pain medications, anti-inflammatory drugs, pain medications, muscle relaxants, and medical marijuana. Currently, the injured worker complained of persistent mid and low back pain radiating into the lower extremities. Magnetic Resonance Imaging of the thoracic spine revealed thoracic degenerative disc disease with disc protrusion. He rated his pain 4 out of 10 with medications and 8 out of 10 without medications on a pain scale from 1 to 10. He was diagnosed with chronic thoracic pain with radicular symptoms. The treatment plan that was requested for authorization on September 17, 2015, included a prescription for Orphenadrine 100 mg, #60 with one refill. On August 24, 2015, a request for a prescription for Orphenadrine was denied by utilization review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Orphenadrine 100mg #60 with 1 refill: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Muscle relaxants (for pain).

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 but rather ongoing 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.