

Case Number:	CM15-0199637		
Date Assigned:	10/15/2015	Date of Injury:	11/27/1982
Decision Date:	11/23/2015	UR Denial Date:	09/15/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/12/2015

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: Maryland

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Neuromuscular Medicine

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 53 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 11-27-1982. The injured worker is being treated for internal derangement right knee, psychogenic pain, and long-term use of medications. Treatment to date has included surgical intervention (right knee arthroscopy, 1984), medications, and injections. Per the Primary Treating Physician's Progress Report dated 8-11-2015, the injured worker presented for a follow-up visit. He reported right knee pain with radiation to the right iliotibial band. Pain is made better with massage and medications. A Synvisc injection did provide some benefit. He utilizes Ambien for insomnia, without this medication he is only able to sleep 10 minutes at a time. He reports no side effects. Current medications include Voltaren gel, Methadone, Cyclobenzaprine, Ambien, Diclofenac, Gemfibrozil, Motrin, Androgel, Hydrochlorothiazide, Lisinopril and Cymbalta. Objective findings included an antalgic gait. He was described as moderately obese and in pain. Per the medical records, the IW has been prescribed Ambien since at least 9-04-2012. There is no documentation of improvement in symptoms of sleep attributed to the use of Ambien. Disability status was permanent and stationary. The plan of care included medication management. Authorization was requested on 9-08-2015 for Ambien 10mg #30 (DOS 9-02-2015). On 9-15-2015 Utilization Review non-certified the request for Ambien 10mg #30.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Ambien 10mg #30: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain (Chronic): Ambien (Zolpidem), (2015).

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain (Chronic) - Zolpidem (Ambien).

Decision rationale: Ambien 10mg #30 is not medically necessary per the ODG guidelines. The MTUS Guidelines do not address insomnia or Ambien. The ODG states that Zolpidem (Ambien) is a prescription short-acting non-benzodiazepine hypnotic, which is recommended for short-term (7-10 days) treatment of insomnia. The ODG states that proper sleep hygiene is critical to the individual with chronic pain and often is hard to obtain. Various medications may provide short-term benefit. While sleeping pills, so-called minor tranquilizers, and anti-anxiety agents are commonly prescribed in chronic pain, pain specialists rarely, if ever, recommend them for long-term use. The documentation indicates that this patient has been using this medication long term. The documentation does not indicate extenuating circumstances that necessitate this medication long term. The request for Ambien is not medically necessary.