

Case Number:	CM15-0200517		
Date Assigned:	10/15/2015	Date of Injury:	03/10/2010
Decision Date:	12/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	09/28/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	10/13/2015

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 46 year old, female who sustained a work related injury on 3-10-10. A review of the medical records shows she is being treated for low back and bilateral foot pain. In the progress notes dated 8-20-15 and 9-21-15, the injured worker reports frequent, persistent low back pain that radiates down left leg with numbness and tingling. She rates the pain level a 6 out of 10. She also complains of bilateral foot pain. She rates the right foot pain a 9 out of 10 and the left foot pain a 4 out of 10. She states taking Ibuprofen brings pain level down from 8 out of 10 to 4 out of 10. She is able to walk for 40 minutes instead of 30 minutes with medications. On physical exam dated 9-21-15, she has decreased lumbar range of motion. She has tenderness on palpation of the lumbar paraspinal muscles. She has hypertonicity on the left. She has tenderness and hypertonicity in the left gluteal muscles. She has decreased right ankle range of motion. She has tenderness over the plantar fascia in both feet. Current medications include Ibuprofen. She is working. The treatment plan includes a request for topical medicated cream. The Request for Authorization dated 9-23-15 has a request for Flurbiprofen 20%-baclofen 5%-lidocaine 4%-menthol 4% cream. In the Utilization Review dated 9-28-15, the requested treatment of Flurbiprofen 20%-baclofen 5%-lidocaine 4%-menthol 4% cream 180gm is not medically necessary.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Flurbiprofen/Baclofen/Lidocaine/Menthol Cream (20%/5%/4%/4%) 180gm: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Topical Analgesics.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Topical Analgesics.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on topical analgesics states: Recommended as an option as indicated below. Largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety, primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed. (Namaka, 2004) These agents are applied locally to painful areas with advantages that include lack of systemic side effects, absence of drug interactions, and no need to titrate. (Colombo, 2006) Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control (including NSAIDs, opioids, capsaicin, local anesthetics, antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, adrenergic receptor agonist, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor). (Argoff, 2006) There is little to no research to support the use of many of these agents. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. The requested medication contains ingredients (baclofen) which are not indicated per the California MTUS for topical analgesic use. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.