

Case Number:	CM15-0223230		
Date Assigned:	11/19/2015	Date of Injury:	01/27/2015
Decision Date:	12/31/2015	UR Denial Date:	11/05/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/13/2015

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: California, District of Columbia, Maryland
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Anesthesiology, Pain Management

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 31 year old male who sustained an industrial injury on January 27, 2015. The worker is being treated for: injury to cervical spine, left shoulder and thoracic spine. Subjective: April 2015 he reported neck pain radiating to left shoulder and hand and back pain that radiates to the left leg. February 03, 2015 he reported complaint of neck pain that radiates numbness, tingling and pain into middle finger. There is also noted complaint of left shoulder pain with inability to raise overhead and "it feels a nerve like burning pain down my arm and into middle finger." There is noted left shoulder and blade pain. Objective: April 2015 noted a drop arm testing positive and tenderness noted upon palpation in the AC joint, rhomboids, subdeltoid bursa and trapezius. February 2015 noted cervical spine with moderate tenderness along the left paraspinal muscles, mild tenderness C6 and C7 with trapezius spasm: the left posterior shoulder, scapula region found with mild swelling and moderate tenderness. Diagnostic: March 2015 EMG NCV testing; UDS April 2015, MRI March 2015. Medication: April 2015: Terocin patch, and Ibuprofen. February 2015: Flexeril, and Ibuprofen. May 2015: Terocin and Ibuprofen. Treatment: medication, activity and work modification, February 2015 POC noted pending authorization PT session; April 2015 POC noted completed 6 sessions PT "that was noted not beneficial," also recommending chiropractic care. On October 29, 2015 a request was made for Terocin patch 4% #30 (prescribed May 19, 2015) that was noncertified by Utilization Review on November 04, 2015.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Terocin Patch 4 Percent, Apply 1 Patch to Affected Area, 12 Hours on 12 Hours off #30 Patches/Month with No Refills (Prescribed 5/19/15): 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: Terocin is capsaicin, lidocaine, menthol, methyl salicylate, and boswellia serrata. Per MTUS p 112 "Indications: There are positive randomized studies with capsaicin cream in patients with osteoarthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic non-specific back pain, but it should be considered experimental in very high doses. Although topical capsaicin has moderate to poor efficacy, it may be particularly useful (alone or in conjunction with other modalities) in patients whose pain has not been controlled successfully with conventional therapy." Methyl salicylate may have an indication for chronic pain in this context. Per MTUS p105, "Recommended. Topical salicylate (e.g., Ben-Gay, methyl salicylate) is significantly better than placebo in chronic pain. (Mason-BMJ, 2004)." However, the other ingredients in Terocin are not indicated. The preponderance of evidence indicates that overall, this medication is not medically necessary. Regarding topical lidocaine, MTUS states (p112) "Neuropathic pain: Recommended for localized peripheral pain after there has been evidence of a trial of first-line therapy (tricyclic or SNRI anti-depressants or an AED such as gabapentin or Lyrica). Non-neuropathic pain: Not recommended. There is only one trial that tested 4% lidocaine for treatment of chronic muscle pain. The results showed there was no superiority over placebo. (Scudds, 1995)." Per MTUS p25, Boswellia Serrata Resin is not recommended for chronic pain. Terocin patches contain menthol. The CA MTUS, ODG, National Guidelines Clearinghouse, and ACOEM provide no evidence-based recommendations regarding the topical application of menthol. It is the opinion of this IMR reviewer that a lack of endorsement, a lack of mention, inherently implies a lack of recommendation, or a status equivalent to "not recommended". Since menthol is not medically indicated, then the overall product is not indicated per MTUS as outlined below. Note the statement on page 111: Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. Regarding the use of multiple medications, MTUS p60 states, "Only one medication should be given at a time, and interventions that are active and passive should remain unchanged at the time of the medication change. A trial should be given for each individual medication. Analgesic medications should show effects within 1 to 3 days, and the analgesic effect of antidepressants should occur within 1 week. A record of pain and function with the medication should be recorded. (Mens, 2005) The recent AHRQ review of comparative effectiveness and safety of analgesics for osteoarthritis concluded that each of the analgesics was associated with a unique set of benefits and risks, and no currently available analgesic was identified as offering a clear overall advantage compared with the others." Therefore, it would be optimal to trial each medication individually. The request is not medically necessary.