

Case Number:	CM15-0031463		
Date Assigned:	02/25/2015	Date of Injury:	01/15/2010
Decision Date:	04/08/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/19/2015

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: Texas, New York, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational 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 applicant is a represented [REDACTED] employee who has filed a claim for chronic pain syndrome reportedly associated with an industrial injury of January 15, 2010. In a Utilization Review Report dated February 13, 2015, the claims administrator failed to approve requests for various vitamins, dietary supplements, and topical compounds. The claims administrator referenced a January 27, 2015 progress note in its determination. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. On January 27, 2015, the applicant reported persistent complaints of knee and leg pain. The applicant was asked to consult a knee surgeon to consider a total knee arthroplasty. The applicant had a BMI of 28. The applicant's medications included Norco, Tylenol, and several vitamins, dietary supplements, and a topical compound. It was stated that the applicant was working despite her ongoing chronic pain complaints.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Vitamin A/ Vitamin D/ Zinc oxide/ Petrolatum/ Cod liver oil: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/>

PMC3011108/ Surg Neurol Int. 2010; 1; 80 Published online 2010 Dec 13. doi: 10.4103/2152-7806.73804.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM V.3 > Chronic Pain > General Principles of Treatment > Medications > Vitamins. Recommendation: Vitamins for Chronic Pain Vitamins are not recommended for treatment of chronic pain if documented deficiencies or other nutritional deficit states are absent. Strength of Evidence Not Recommended, Insufficient Evidence (I).

Decision rationale: No, the request for vitamin A, vitamin D, zinc oxide, petrolatum, and cod liver oil were collectively not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. The MTUS does not address the topic of vitamins. However, the Third Edition ACOEM Guidelines note that vitamins are not recommended in the treatment of chronic pain in the absence of a documented nutritional deficit state. Here, however, there was no mention of the applicant's having any issues with vitamin A deficiency, vitamin D deficiency, zinc deficiency, etc. No clear or compelling applicant-specific rationale or medical evidence was furnished so as to offset the unfavorable ACOEM position on the article at issue. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.

Mineral oil: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3011108/> Surg Neurol Int. 2010; 1; 80 Published online 2010 Dec 13. doi: 10.4103/2152-7806.73804.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM V.3 > Chronic Pain > General Principles of Treatment > Medications > Vitamins Recommendation: Vitamins for Chronic Pain Vitamins are not recommended for treatment of chronic pain if documented deficiencies or other nutritional deficit states are absent. Strength of Evidence Not Recommended, Insufficient Evidence (I).

Decision rationale: Similarly, the request for mineral oil was likewise not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. The request is essentially analogous to the request in question 1. The MTUS does not address the topic of vitamins or nutritional supplements such as the mineral oil at issue. However, the Third Edition ACOEM Guidelines note that such agents and/or vitamins are not recommended in the treatment of chronic pain in the absence of documented nutritional deficit states. Here, there was no mention of the applicant's having any issues with mineral oil deficiency. No clear, compelling, or cogent applicant-specific rationale for usage of this particular agent was furnished. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.

Topical ointment #90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/>

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111.

Decision rationale: Finally, the request for a topical ointment was likewise not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. The ingredients in and/or composition of the compound in question were not furnished. However, page 111 of the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines notes that topical analgesics and topical compounds, as a class, are deemed "largely experimental." Here, the applicant's ongoing usage of first-line oral pharmaceuticals such as Norco effectively obviated the need for the largely experimental topical compounded ointment at issue. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.