

Case Number:	CM15-0044211		
Date Assigned:	03/16/2015	Date of Injury:	08/20/2009
Decision Date:	04/16/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/18/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/09/2015

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: Arizona, California
 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 59-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 8/20/09. The injured worker reported symptoms in the back. The injured worker was diagnosed as having lumbar degenerative joint disease, chronic low back pain with disk protrusion L5-S1 and chronic right sciatica. Treatments to date have included opioid medications. Currently, the injured worker complains of pain in the back. The plan of care was for medication prescriptions and a follow up appointment at a later date.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Nucynta ER 200mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Pain Chapter, Opioids criteria for use, Opioids chronic pain.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines opioids Page(s): 82-92.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS guidelines, opioids are not indicated for mechanical or compressive etiologies. In addition, the maximum morphine equivalent daily should not exceed 120 mg. The Nucynta 200 mg BID ER is equal to 160 mg of Morphine in addition the Nucynta 100 mg prescribed. There were no pain scores documented. Length of use was not provided. The continued use of Nucynta ER is not appropriate or medically necessary.

Nucynta 100mg: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Pain Chapter, Opioids criteria for use, Opioids chronic pain.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines opioids Page(s): 82-92.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS guidelines, opioids are not indicated for mechanical or compressive etiologies. In addition, the maximum morphine equivalent daily should not exceed 120 mg. The Nucynta 100 mg BID ER is equal to 80 mg of Morphine in addition the Nucynta ER 200mg prescribed (160mg of Morphine). There were no pain scores documented. Length of use was not provided. The continued use of Nucynta 100 mg is not appropriate or medically necessary.

Urine drug testing (UDT): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for Use of Opioids, Steps to avoid misuse/addiction.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines urine toxicology Page(s): 82-92.

Decision rationale: According to the California MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, urine toxicology screen is used to assess presence of illicit drugs or to monitor adherence to prescription medication program. There is no documentation from the provider to suggest that there was illicit drug use or noncompliance. There were no prior urine drug screen results that indicated noncompliance, substance abuse or other inappropriate activity. In addition, the continued use of Nucynta as above is not medically necessary. Based on the above references and clinical history a urine toxicology screen is not medically necessary.