

Case Number:	CM15-0046680		
Date Assigned:	03/18/2015	Date of Injury:	01/21/2011
Decision Date:	04/20/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/05/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/11/2015

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 57 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on January 21, 2011. He has reported left shoulder pain. Diagnoses have included left shoulder rotator cuff tear, SLAP lesion of the left shoulder, and synovitis of the left shoulder. Treatment to date has included medications, home exercise, heat, and ice. A progress note dated February 11, 2015 indicates a chief complaint of persistent left shoulder pain. The treating physician documented a plan of care that included continued home exercise, heat, ice, and medications. A request was made for continued Norco along with topical analgesics.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 10/325 mg #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 91, 78-80, 124.

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

Decision rationale: Norco is a short acting opioid used for breakthrough pain. According to the MTUS guidelines, it is not indicated as 1st line therapy for neuropathic pain, and chronic back pain. It is not indicated for mechanical or compressive etiologies. It is recommended for a trial basis for short-term use. Long Term-use has not been supported by any trials. In this case, the claimant had been on Norco for over 7 months .There were no pain scores or documentation of failed Tylenol use or weaning. The continued and long-term use of Norco is not medically necessary.