

Case Number:	CM15-0053373		
Date Assigned:	03/26/2015	Date of Injury:	11/21/2005
Decision Date:	05/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/25/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/20/2015

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
Certification(s)/Specialty: Emergency 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 injured worker is a 41 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 11/21/05. The injured worker was diagnosed as having lumbosacral radiculopathy, chronic pain syndrome, lumbar post laminectomy syndrome x 3, cervical radiculopathy, myofascial dysfunction, moderate obesity and gastropathy secondary to anti-inflammatory meds. Treatment to date has included aqua therapy, cane for ambulation, physical therapy, home exercise program, lumbar support and oral medications including opioids. Currently, the injured worker complains of low back pain and is currently using 6-8 Norco per day with reflux. Myofascial triggers are noted at bilateral paravertebral L4 and L5 with decreased sensation in bilateral posterior thighs. Treatment plan included continuation of oral medications with decreased dosing.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 10/325mg #180: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, On-Going Management, Opioids for Chronic Pain Page(s): 78-82.

Decision rationale: The requested Norco 10/325mg #180 is not medically necessary. The California MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, Opioids, On-Going Management, Pages 78-80, Opioids for Chronic Pain, Pages 80-82, recommend continued use of this opiate for the treatment of moderate to severe pain, with documented objective evidence of derived functional benefit, as well as documented opiate surveillance measures. The injured worker has low back pain and is currently using 6-8 Norco per day with reflux. The treating physician has documented myofascial triggers are noted at bilateral paravertebral L4 and L5 with decreased sensation in bilateral posterior thighs. The treating physician has not documented VAS pain quantification with and without medications, duration of treatment, and objective evidence of derived functional benefit such as improvements in activities of daily living or reduced work restrictions or decreased reliance on medical intervention, nor measures of opiate surveillance including an executed narcotic pain contract or urine drug screening. The criteria noted above not having been met. Therefore, the request for Norco 10/325mg #180 is not medically necessary.