

Case Number:	CM15-0059550		
Date Assigned:	04/06/2015	Date of Injury:	03/15/2010
Decision Date:	05/05/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/19/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/30/2015

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, Indiana, New York
Certification(s)/Specialty: Internal 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 47 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on March 15, 2010. He has reported neck pain and lower back pain. Diagnoses have included lumbar spine intervertebral disc disorder, lumbar spine degenerative disc disease, cervicgia, cervical spine post laminectomy syndrome, cervical spine intervertebral disc disorder, cervical spine degenerative disc disease, and thoracic/lumbosacral neuritis/radiculitis. Treatment to date has included medications, physical therapy, home exercise, epidural steroid injection, and medications. A progress note dated March 10, 2015 indicates a chief complaint of increased lower back pain and swelling. The treating physician documented a plan of care that included pharmacogenetic testing to evaluate for possible rapid metabolism of medications.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Pharmacogenetic testing (PGT): Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Pain Chapter, Cytokine DNA testing; Genetic testing for potential opioid abuse; Pharmacogenetic testing.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain Section, Pharmacogenetics.

Decision rationale: Pursuant to the Official Disability Guidelines, pharmacogenetics testing is not medically necessary. The guidelines do not recommend pharmacogenetics testing. Testing is not recommended except in a research setting. In clinical practice, no tests have been recommended by the United States FDA. For additional details see the Official Disability Guidelines. In this case, the injured worker's working diagnoses are intervertebral lumbar depth disorder myelopathy lumbar region; obesity; cervicgia; both laminectomy syndrome cervical region; intervertebral cervical disc disorder with myelopathy cervical region; degenerative lumbar/lumbosacral intervertebral disc; brachial neuritis/radiculitis; thoracic/lumbosacral neuritis/radiculitis; and degeneration of cervical inter-vertebral disc, the current list of medications include Roxicodone 30 mg tablet 1 to 2 every 4 to 6 hours as needed and Norco 10/325 mg one every four hours as needed (maximum six per day). The treating provider is adding a trial of OxyContin 40 mg b.i.d. to the current drug regimen. The provider is requesting immediate authorization for pharmacogenetics testing to establish the patient is a rapid metabolizer of the medications. Pharmacogenetics testing is not recommended. Pharmacogenetics testing is recommended only in a research setting. Consequently, absent guideline recommendations for pharmacogenetics testing, pharmacogenetics testing is not medically necessary.