

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0081506		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	05/04/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	02/26/2009
<b>Decision Date:</b>	06/02/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/03/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/28/2015

### 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: 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 39 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 2/26/09. The injured worker reported symptoms in the left shoulder and neck. The injured worker was diagnosed as having cervical sprain/strain and sprain/strain other specified sites of shoulder and upper arm. Treatments to date have included oral pain medication, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, muscle relaxant, topical patches, physical therapy, acupuncture treatment and status post right shoulder surgery. Currently, the injured worker complains of left shoulder and neck. 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:

**Flexeril 5 mg, thirty count:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 64.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 47-49, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) Pages

41-42. Muscle relaxants Pages 63-66. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation FDA Prescribing Information Cyclobenzaprine <http://www.drugs.com/pro/flexeril.html>.

**Decision rationale:** Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule (MTUS) addresses muscle relaxants. American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) 2nd Edition (2004) states that muscle relaxants seem no more effective than NSAIDs for treating patients with musculoskeletal problems, and using them in combination with NSAIDs has no demonstrated benefit. Muscle relaxants may hinder return to function by reducing the patient's motivation or ability to increase activity. Table 3-1 states that muscle relaxants are not recommended. Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines addresses muscle relaxants. Muscle relaxants should be used with caution as a second-line option for short-term treatment. Efficacy appears to diminish over time, and prolonged use of some medications in this class may lead to dependence. According to a review in American Family Physician, muscle relaxants should not be the primary drug class of choice for musculoskeletal conditions. Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines state that Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) is an option for a short course of therapy. Treatment should be brief. The addition of Cyclobenzaprine to other agents is not recommended. FDA guidelines state that Cyclobenzaprine is indicated for acute musculoskeletal conditions. Cyclobenzaprine should be used only for short periods (up to two or three weeks) because adequate evidence of effectiveness for more prolonged use is not available. Medical records document that the patient's occupational injuries are chronic. Medical records indicate the long-term use of the muscle relaxant Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril). Medical records document chronic neck and shoulder complaints. MTUS, ACOEM, and FDA guidelines do not support the use of Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) for chronic conditions. Medical records document the long-term use of NSAIDs. Per MTUS, using muscle relaxants in combination with NSAIDs has no demonstrated benefit. The use of Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) is not supported by MTUS or ACOEM guidelines. Therefore, the request for Flexeril (Cyclobenzaprine) is not medically necessary.