

Case Number:	CM15-0089479		
Date Assigned:	05/13/2015	Date of Injury:	02/07/2005
Decision Date:	06/22/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/22/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/09/2015

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: 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 49 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 2/7/2005. He reported neck and low back pain. The injured worker was diagnosed as having cervical spondylosis. Treatment to date has included medications, x-rays, magnetic resonance imaging, neck surgery. The request is for Doral. On 10/16/2014, he complained of neck and low back pain. He reported having pain radiation to the left upper extremity. On 12/18/2014, he complained of poor sleep due to neck pain and spasms. He requested a sleep aid due to only sleeping 3-4 hours at night. On 1/22/2015, he was seen for 3 month follow up after neck surgery. He complained of continued pain which he rated as 9/10. He indicated he was experiencing difficulty with swallowing, and coughing. He also complained of low back pain with radiation into the lower extremities. He reported having 90% pain relief with a lumbar epidural steroid injection that lasted for 2 months. He rated his low back pain an 8/10. The treatment plan included: trigger point injections, Anaprox, Prilosec, and Doral, and Ultracet. On 4/9/2015, he reported ongoing neck pain with radiation to the left upper extremity. He rated his pain as 9/10 without medications and 7/10 with medications. He had continued complaint of difficulty with swallowing, and coughing episodes that exacerbated his neck and low back pain. He reported being able to sleep up to 6-7 hours at night with the use of Doral. The treatment plan included: Norco, Prilosec, Anaprox, Doral, 4 wheel walker, and home interferential stimulation unit.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Doral 15mg, #30: 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) and Insomnia Treatment, Pain Chapter.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Benzodiazepines Page(s): 23. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Pain Chapter.

Decision rationale: According to the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, benzodiazepines are not recommended for long-term use because long-term efficacy is unproven and there is a risk of dependence. Most guidelines limit use to 4 weeks. Tolerance to hypnotic effects develops rapidly. Doral is a hypnotic and per ODG, adults who use hypnotic benzodiazepines, have a greater than 3-fold increased risk for early death. ODG notes that in 2010, hypnotics may have been associated with 320,000 to 507,000 excess deaths in the U.S. alone. The long term use of benzodiazepines is not supported. Utilization Review has allowed modification to allow for weaning. The request for Doral 15mg, #30 is not medically necessary and appropriate.