

Case Number:	CM14-0126602		
Date Assigned:	08/13/2014	Date of Injury:	05/03/2011
Decision Date:	10/08/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/24/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/11/2014

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. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Medicine and is licensed to practice in Florida. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 32-year-old male who reported injuries after being run over by a forklift on 05/03/2011. On 07/08/2014, his diagnoses included status post right carpal tunnel release done on 07/25/2013; persistent left carpal tunnel syndrome; status post left carpal tunnel release done on 01/23/2014; history of multiple fractures in the right lower extremity; left ankle fracture; status post multiple surgeries with most recent one for nonunion of right femur on 09/13/2013; and chronic low back pain. An EMG of the right lower extremity on 07/15/2013 revealed diagnoses of severe right peroneal neuropathy (neurotmesis). His complaints included low back pain rated 8/10 to 9/10; with his medications, it drops down to 5/10 to 6/10. The note stated that his medications did decrease his pain levels and allowed him to be more functional. He was able to perform some exercises and walking, and it had improved the quality of his life. His medications included MS-Contin 15mg, Norco 10/325 mg, Colace 100 mg, Prilosec 20 mg, and Voltaren gel. On 08/05/2014, this worker stated that his medications were helping him but he thought that the MS-Contin was causing him a significant demotivation and just causing him to not want to do anything. The treatment plan was to begin to wean him off the MS-Contin per his request. The MS-Contin dose was being cut in half from 15 mg twice a day to 15 mg once a day. A Request for Authorization dated 07/21/2014 was included in this injured worker's chart.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

MS Contin 15mg #60 3-6 month supply: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 74-95.

Decision rationale: The request for MS Contin 15mg #60 3-6 month supply is not medically necessary. The California MTUS Guidelines recommend ongoing review of opioid use including documentation of pain relief, functional status, appropriate medication use, and side effects. In most cases, analgesic treatment should begin with acetaminophen, aspirin, and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), antidepressants, and/or anticonvulsants. Long term use may result in immunological or endocrine problems. There was no documentation in the submitted chart regarding appropriate long term monitoring/evaluations, including failed trials of NSAIDs, aspirin, antidepressants or anticonvulsants, or drug screens. Additionally, there was no frequency specified in the request. Since this injured worker was taking more than opioid medication, without the frequency, the morphine equivalency dosage could not be calculated. Therefore, this request for MS Contin 15mg #60 3-6 month supply is not medically necessary.