

Case Number:	CM14-0149180		
Date Assigned:	09/19/2014	Date of Injury:	07/21/2007
Decision Date:	10/17/2014	UR Denial Date:	09/04/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/15/2014

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 Internal Medicine, has a subspecialty in Nephrology and is licensed to practice in California. 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 patient is a 52-year-old male who has submitted a claim for lumbosacral strain with bilateral entrapment of the cluneal nerve associated with an industrial injury date of 7/21/2007. Medical records from 2014 were reviewed. Patient complained of low back pain, rated 5 to 6/10 in severity, radiating to the lower extremities described as numbness. A physical examination of the lumbar spine showed tenderness and limited motion. His motor strength and reflexes were normal. The treatment to date has included home exercise program, hot/cold modality, and medications such as ibuprofen and topical creams. A Utilization review from 9/4/2014 denied the request for Topical compound: Ethoxy liq Diglycol, Versapro cream, Cyclobenzaprine powder HCL, Lidocaine powder HCL, Baclofen powder, Gabapentin powder, Ketamine HCL powder, Diclofenac powder sodium with 3 refills because of limited published studies concerning its efficacy and safety.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Topical compound: Ethoxy liq Diglycol, Versapro cream, Cyclobenzaprine powder HCL, Lidocaine powder HCL, Baclofen powder, Gabapentin powder, Ketamine HCL powder, Diclofenac powder sodium with 3 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-113.

Decision rationale: As stated on pages 111-113 of the California MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine safety or efficacy. Cyclobenzaprine and baclofen are not recommended for use as a topical analgesic. Topical formulations of lidocaine (whether creams, lotions or gels) are not indicated for neuropathic or non-neuropathic pain complaints. CA MTUS does not support the use of opioid medications and gabapentin in a topical formulation. Ketamine is only recommended for treatment of neuropathic pain in refractory cases in which all primary and secondary treatment has been exhausted. Topical NSAIDs formulation is only supported for Diclofenac in the California MTUS. In addition, there is little to no research as for the use of flurbiprofen in compounded products. The guidelines do not address Ethoxy Diglycol and Versapro cream. In this case, topical cream is prescribed as adjuvant therapy to oral medications. However, the prescribed medication contains cyclobenzaprine, baclofen, lidocaine, gabapentin, and ketamine, which are not recommended for topical use. Guidelines state that any compounded product that contains a drug class, which is not recommended, is not recommended. Therefore, the request for Topical compound: Ethoxy liq Diglycol, Versapro cream, Cyclobenzaprine powder HCL, Lidocaine powder HCL, Baclofen powder, Gabapentin powder, Ketamine HCL powder, Diclofenac powder sodium with 3 refills is not medically necessary.