

Case Number:	CM14-0214029		
Date Assigned:	12/31/2014	Date of Injury:	05/11/2010
Decision Date:	02/25/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/10/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/22/2014

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. 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: New Jersey, New York
 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 45 year-old male who was injured on 5/11/10 due to severe electrocution with extensive body burns. On exam, he had decreased range of motion of the right shoulder, positive impingement sign, tenderness, but no weakness. Electrodiagnostic testing showed right L4-S1 radiculopathy. He was diagnosed with status post severe electrocution with extensive body burns, traumatic brain injury, right shoulder tear status post repair, depression, lower back pain, and right lower extremity radiculopathy. In 5/2014, he had arthroscopic cuff repair. He had psychotherapy, and post-operative right shoulder physical therapy. The current request is for Norco.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Norco 10-325mg #40: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 76-80.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 78-79.

Decision rationale: The request for Norco is not medically necessary. The majority of the chart consisted of hospital records from his arthroscopy. The patient has been on opiates for unclear amount of time without objective documentation of the improvement in pain and functional capacity. There is no documentation of what his pain was like previously and how much Norco decreased his pain. There is no documentation of the four A's of ongoing monitoring: pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and aberrant drug-related behaviors. There are no urine drug screens or drug contract documented. There are no clear plans for future weaning, or goal of care. It is unclear if the patient had other conservative measures such as acupuncture or chiropractic sessions and if there was improvement from these modalities. Because of these reasons, the request for Norco is considered medically unnecessary.