

Case Number:	CM15-0014087		
Date Assigned:	03/10/2015	Date of Injury:	07/20/2007
Decision Date:	05/07/2015	UR Denial Date:	01/16/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	01/26/2015

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: New Jersey, Michigan, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular 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 47 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 7/20/2007. The current diagnoses are chronic intractable neck pain secondary to cervical degenerative disc disease, chronic daily headaches, status post anterior cervical fusion (4/17/2014), chronic pain syndrome, opioid dependence, severe neuropathic pain, and status post left shoulder arthroscopy (10/23/2014). According to the progress report dated 2/2/2015, the injured worker complains of persistent left shoulder and neck pain. Additionally, she reports feeling depressed and having difficulty sleeping at night, secondary to pain. The pain is rated 5/10 on a subjective pain scale. The current medications are Norco. Treatment to date has included medication management and surgical intervention. The plan of care includes Voltaren gel.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Voltaren gel 1% Day supply: 30, Qty: 400: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics, Nonselective NSAIDS Page(s): 111, 107.

Decision rationale: Voltaren Gel (Diclofenac) is a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID). According to MTUS, in Chronic Pain Medical Treatment guidelines section Topical Analgesics (page 111), topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. Many agents are combined to other pain medications for pain control. There is limited research to support the use of many of these agents. Furthermore, according to MTUS guidelines, any compounded product that contains at least one drug or drug class that is not recommended is not recommended. Diclofenac is used for osteoarthritis pain of wrist, ankle and elbow and there is no strong evidence for its use for spine pain such as cervical spine pain, shoulder and knee pain. There is no evidence of right upper extremity osteoarthritis. Therefore, the request for Voltaren gel 1% is not medically necessary.