

Case Number:	CM15-0120745		
Date Assigned:	07/01/2015	Date of Injury:	12/15/2008
Decision Date:	08/14/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/05/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/22/2015

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: North Carolina

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 44 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 12/15/08. Initial complaints and diagnoses are not available. Treatments to date include medications and multiple surgical procedures including back surgery, medial branch blocks, and radiofrequency ablations of affected facet joints. Diagnostic studies are not addressed. Current complaints include neck and low back pain. Current diagnoses include cervicalgia and lumbosacral facet arthroplasty. In a progress note dated 05/28/15 the treating provider reports the plan of care as medications including Nucyta, Gralise, Zolpidem, and Zubsolv; as well as a radiofrequency ablation of the lumbar medial branch nerves L3-L5. The requested treatment includes Zolpidem.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Zolpidem Tatrata ER (extended release) 12.5 mg Qty 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: Zolpidem.

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) ambien.

Decision rationale: The California MTUS and the ACOEM do not specifically address the requested medication. PER the ODG: Zolpidem is a prescription short-acting non-benzodiazepine hypnotic approved for the short-term treatment of insomnia. Proper sleep hygiene is critical to the individual with chronic pain. While sleeping pills, so-called minor tranquilizers and anti-anxiety medications are commonly prescribed in chronic pain, pain specialists rarely, if ever, recommend them for long-term use. There is also concern that they may increase pain and depression over the long-term. The medication is not intended for use greater than 6 weeks. There is no notation or rationale given for longer use in the provided progress reports. There is no documentation of other preferred long-term insomnia intervention choices being tried and failed. For these reasons, the request is not medically necessary.