

Case Number:	CM15-0122286		
Date Assigned:	07/06/2015	Date of Injury:	02/24/1999
Decision Date:	08/06/2015	UR Denial Date:	05/26/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/24/2015

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 60 year old male with an industrial injury dated 02/24/1999. His diagnoses included lumbago, degenerative disc disease, lumbosacral region, sacroilitis, failed back surgery, post laminectomy syndrome (lumbar) and radicular syndrome (thoracic/lumbosacral). Prior treatment included lumbar rhizotomy and medications. He presents on 05/08/2015 for follow up of chronic low back pain. Documentation notes the Neurontin provides relief of neuropathic pain, Soma helps with acute muscle spasms, Valium relieves anxiety, Celebrex helps with inflammation, Terocin lotion provides localized pain relief and Norco is used for breakthrough pain. He rates the pain as 3-6/10. Physical exam noted increased range of motion in all planes of the lumbar spine with diminished paraspinal tenderness noted bilaterally. Straight leg raise was negative bilaterally. Treatment plan included continuing his medications. The treatment request is for Soma 350 mg # 45.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Soma 350mg #45: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines muscle relaxants Page(s): 63-65.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on muscle relaxants states: Recommend non-sedating muscle relaxants with caution as a second-line option for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations in patients with chronic LBP. (Chou, 2007) (Mens, 2005) (Van Tulder, 1998) (van Tulder, 2003) (van Tulder, 2006) (Schnitzer, 2004) (See, 2008) Muscle relaxants may be effective in reducing pain and muscle tension, and increasing mobility. However, in most LBP cases, they show no benefit beyond NSAIDs in pain and overall improvement. Also there is no additional benefit shown in combination with NSAIDs. Efficacy appears to diminish over time, and prolonged use of some medications in this class may lead to dependence. (Homik, 2004) (Chou, 2004) This medication is not intended for long-term use per the California MTUS. The medication has not been prescribed for the flare-up of chronic low back pain. This is not an approved use for the medication. For these reasons, criteria for the use of this medication have not been met. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.