

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0122329		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/06/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	11/22/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/31/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/16/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	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: Massachusetts

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pain Management

### 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 33 year old female with an industrial injury dated 11/22/2013. The injured worker's diagnoses include ulnar neuropathy. Treatment consisted of prescribed medications and periodic follow up visits. In a progress note dated 06/09/2015, the injured worker subjective complaint was bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome. Objective findings revealed tender wrists. Some documents within the submitted medical records are difficult to decipher. The treating physician prescribed Topical Compound: Gabapentin 10%, Lidocaine 2%, in trigger point gel with Aloe Vera 0.5% and Emu oil 30%, Capsaicin (natural) 0.025%, Menthol 10%, Camphor 5% Gel, 60 grams now under review.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Topical Compound: Gabapentin 10%, Lidocaine 2%, in trigger point gel with Aloe Vera 0.5% and Emu oil 30%, Capsaicin (natural) 0.025%, Menthol 10%, Camphor 5% Gel, 60 grams:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Capsaicin topical, Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS), Lidocaine (anesthetic), Gabapentin (Neurontin); Topical Analgesics. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines: Pain (chronic) - Topical Analgesics; Compounded

topical analgesics; Capsaicin, topical; Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS) medications; Lidocaine (anesthetic), Gabapentin (Neurontin); Diabetic neuropathy; Herbal medications.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines, (1) Medications for chronic pain, (2) Topical Analgesics Page(s): 60, 111-113.

**Decision rationale:** The claimant sustained a work injury in November 2013. When seen, she had bilateral carpal tunnel syndrome. Medications and topical cream were helping. Physical examination findings included wrist tenderness. Transdermal topical cream, which included compounded gabapentin, was prescribed. Reaching permanent and stationary status at the next visit is referenced. Oral gabapentin has been shown to be effective in the treatment of painful diabetic neuropathy and postherpetic neuralgia and has been considered as a first-line treatment for neuropathic pain. However, its use as a topical product is not recommended. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. By prescribing a compounded medication, in addition to increased risk of adverse side effects, it is not possible to determine whether any derived benefit is due to a particular component. Guidelines also recommend that when prescribing medications only one medication should be given at a time. This medication was not medically necessary.