

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0126707		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/16/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	06/20/2005
<b>Decision Date:</b>	08/11/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	06/05/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/30/2015

### 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 male, who sustained an industrial injury on 6/20/2005, while transferring a patient. The injured worker was diagnosed as having discogenic lumbar condition, status post two previous laminectomies in 2007 and 2011, with persistent symptomatology, including radiculopathy (right greater than left), with foot drop on the left. Treatment to date has included diagnostics, chiropractic, lumbar spine injections, lumbar spinal surgeries (operative reports not included), and medications. A PR2 report (4/15/2015) noted inconsistent urine toxicology screening with this physician no longer prescribing narcotics for this reason. The injured worker wished to change doctors. Currently (5/20/2015 evaluation), the injured worker complains of constant back pain, rated 7-8/10, with radiation down his lower extremity. He also reported spasms and bowel and bladder incontinence. He denied associated depression, sexual dysfunction, or gastrointestinal symptoms. His current medications were Norco and Neurontin. He was currently not working and on permanent disability. The treatment plan included medications, including Norco, Neurontin, Flexeril, Effexor, Trazadone, Naproxen, and Protonix.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Anaprox 550 mg #60:** Overturned

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAID Page(s): 68-72.

**Decision rationale:** The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on NSAID therapy states: Recommended at the lowest dose for the shortest period in patients with moderate to severe pain. Acetaminophen may be considered for initial therapy for patients with mild to moderate pain, and in particular, for those with gastrointestinal, cardiovascular or renovascular risk factors. NSAIDs appear to be superior to acetaminophen, particularly for patients with moderate to severe pain. There is no evidence to recommend one drug in this class over another based on efficacy. In particular, there appears to be no difference between traditional NSAIDs and COX-2 NSAIDs in terms of pain relief. The main concern of selection is based on adverse effects. COX 2 NSAIDs have fewer GI side effects at the risk of increased cardiovascular side effects, although the FDA has concluded that long-term clinical trials are best interpreted to suggest that cardiovascular risk occurs with all NSAIDs and is a class effect (with naproxyn being the safest drug). There is no evidence of long-term effectiveness for pain or function. (Chen, 2008) (Laine, 2008) This medication is recommended for the shortest period of time and at the lowest dose possible. The shortest period of time is not defined in the California MTUS. The requested medication is within the maximum dosing guidelines per the California MTUS. Therefore the request is medically necessary.

**Pantoprazole 20 mg #60:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAID Page(s): 68-72.

**Decision rationale:** The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on NSAID therapy and proton pump inhibitors (PPI) states: Recommend with precautions as indicated below. Clinicians should weight the indications for NSAIDs against both GI and cardiovascular risk factors. Determine if the patient is at risk for gastrointestinal events: (1) age > 65 years; (2) history of peptic ulcer, GI bleeding or perforation; (3) concurrent use of ASA, corticosteroids, and/or an anticoagulant; or (4) high dose/multiple NSAID (e.g., NSAID + low-dose ASA). Recent studies tend to show that H. Pylori does not act synergistically with NSAIDS to develop gastro duodenal lesions. Recommendations Patients with no risk factor and no cardiovascular disease: Non-selective NSAIDs OK (e.g, ibuprofen, naproxen, etc.) Patients at intermediate risk for gastrointestinal events and no cardiovascular disease: (1) A non-selective NSAID with either a PPI (Proton Pump Inhibitor, for example, 20 mg omeprazole daily) or misoprostol (200 g four times daily) or (2) a Cox-2 selective agent. Long-term PPI use (> 1 year) has been shown to increase the risk of hip fracture (adjusted odds ratio 1.44). Patients at high risk for gastrointestinal events with no cardiovascular disease: A Cox-2 selective agent plus a PPI if absolutely necessary. There is no documentation provided that places this patient at intermediate

or high risk that would justify the use of a PPI. For these reasons the criteria set forth above per the California MTUS for the use of this medication has not been met. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.