

Case Number:	CM15-0128351		
Date Assigned:	07/16/2015	Date of Injury:	04/10/2014
Decision Date:	08/11/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/09/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/03/2015

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 47 year old female who sustained an industrial/work injury on 4/10/14. She reported an initial complaint of neck and back pain. The injured worker was diagnosed as having lumbar disc displacement, anxiety and depression, chronic pain syndrome. Treatment to date includes medication, functional capacity evaluation, and chiropractic care. Currently, the injured worker complained of ongoing pain rated 6/10 to the lumbar and cervical spine with radiation to bilateral upper extremities and left lower extremities. There was also stress, anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbance. Per the primary physician's report (PR-2) on 5/20/15, per evaluation, there was mild improvement in function, antalgic gait, gastrointestinal upset with medication, hypertension. Physical exam from 4/20/15 notes positive cervical muscle guarding, spasms, trigger points, upper extremity deep tendon reflexes are 2+, no focal neurological deficit at C4-T1. There is positive pain with palpation to the medial left medial epicondyle and right lateral epicondyle with positive Tinel's sign. There is positive tenderness to palpation in the lumbosacral paravertebral muscles, guarding, and trigger points. The requested treatments include Cyclo-Tramadol cream.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Cyclo-Tramadol cream BID with 1 refill: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines (1) Medications for chronic pain, p60 (2) Topical Analgesics, p111-113 Page(s): 60, 111-113.

Decision rationale: The claimant sustained a work injury in April 2014 and continues to be treated for radiating neck and back pain. When seen, there was an antalgic gait without use of an assistive device. The claimant was noted to move stiffly. She was in mild to moderate distress. She had difficulty transitioning positions. Cyclobenzaprine is a muscle relaxant and there is no evidence for the use of any muscle relaxant as a topical product and guidelines indicate that there is little to no research to support the use of compounded topical Tramadol. 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. In this case, there are other single component topical treatments that could be considered. Guidelines also recommend that when prescribing medications only one medication should be given at a time. This topical medication is not medically necessary.