

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0144119		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	08/05/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	08/04/2005
<b>Decision Date:</b>	10/02/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	07/17/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	07/24/2015

### 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: California, District of Columbia, Maryland  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Anesthesiology, 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 male, who sustained an industrial injury on 8-4-05. The injured worker was diagnosed as having hip impingement and hip labral tear. Treatment to date has included hip arthroscopy with right labrum resection on 7-25-13, hip arthroscopy for acetabular rim plasty on 8-28-14, injections, and medication. On 6-24-15 pain was rated as 6-7 of 10. The injured worker had been taking Nucynta ER since at least 6-24-15. Currently, the injured worker complains of right hip pain. The treating physician requested authorization for Nucynta ER 150mg #60.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Nucynta ER 150mg #60:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids, Criteria for use of Opioids Page(s): 74, 76.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Opioids Page(s): 78.

**Decision rationale:** Per MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines p78 regarding on-going management of opioids "Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain patients on opioids: Pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or non-adherent) drug related behaviors. These domains have been summarized as the '4 A's' (Analgesia, activities of daily living, adverse side effects, and any aberrant drug-taking behaviors).The monitoring of these outcomes over time should affect therapeutic decisions and provide a framework for documentation of the clinical use of these controlled drugs." The MTUS is silent on the use of Nucynta specifically. With regard to Tapentadol (Nucynta), the ODG states: "Recommended as second line therapy for patients who develop intolerable adverse effects with first line opioids. These recent large RCTs concluded that Tapentadol was efficacious and provided efficacy that was similar to oxycodone for the management of chronic osteoarthritis knee and low back pain, with a superior gastrointestinal tolerability profile and fewer treatment discontinuations." Per MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines p78 regarding on-going management of opioids "Four domains have been proposed as most relevant for ongoing monitoring of chronic pain patients on opioids: Pain relief, side effects, physical and psychosocial functioning, and the occurrence of any potentially aberrant (or non-adherent) drug related behaviors. These domains have been summarized as the '4 A's' (Analgesia, activities of daily living, adverse side effects, and any aberrant drug-taking behaviors). The monitoring of these outcomes over time should affect therapeutic decisions and provide a framework for documentation of the clinical use of these controlled drugs." Review of the available medical records reveals no documentation to support the medical necessity of Nucynta nor any documentation addressing the '4 A's' domains, which is a recommended practice for the on-going management of opioids. Specifically, the notes do not appropriately review and document pain relief, functional status improvement, appropriate medication use, or side effects. The MTUS considers this list of criteria for initiation and continuation of opioids in the context of efficacy required to substantiate medical necessity, and they do not appear to have been addressed by the treating physician in the documentation available for review. Furthermore, efforts to rule out aberrant behavior (e.g. CURES report, UDS, opiate agreement) are necessary to assure safe usage and establish medical necessity. There is no documentation comprehensively addressing this concern in the records available for my review. The MTUS recommends discontinuing opioids if there is no overall improvement in function. Furthermore, the documentation submitted for review did not contain evidence of failure of first line opioids. Medical necessity cannot be affirmed and therefore is not medically necessary.