

Case Number:	CM15-0021420		
Date Assigned:	02/11/2015	Date of Injury:	10/04/2014
Decision Date:	03/24/2015	UR Denial Date:	01/23/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/04/2015

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: Texas, Ohio, California
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational Medicine

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 43 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 10/4/2014. She has reported getting fingers caught in a meat cutting machine. The diagnoses have included partial tip amputation of the right thumb. Treatment to date has included therapy, home exercises, hand brace and medication management. Currently, the IW complains of right hand and forearm tenderness, hypersensitivity and pain. Treatment plan included 6 visits of hand therapy and Lidopro ointment 121 grams. On 1/23/2015, Utilization Review non-certified review of 6 visits of hand therapy and Lidopro ointment 121 grams, noting the documentation provided showed the injured worker only completed 2 of 12 sessions previously authorized and the ointment was not medically necessary. The MTUS was cited. On 2/4/2015, the injured worker submitted an application for IMR for 6 visits of hand therapy and Lidopro ointment 121 grams.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Hand therapy; 6 visits: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Physical Medicine.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 48.

Decision rationale: The request for six sessions of hand therapy was not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. As noted in the MTUS Guideline in ACOEM Chapter 3, page 48, it is incumbent upon an attending provider to furnish a prescription for physical therapy which clearly states treatment goals. Here, however, the attending provider did not clearly outline treatment goals. It was not clearly outlined in either of the handwritten January 12, 2015 progress note or in the January 12, 2014 RFA form why an additional six sessions of hand therapy were being sought when the applicant had yet to complete 10 sessions of previously authorized physical therapy. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.

Lidopro ointment 121gm: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 47, 49.

Decision rationale: The request for LidoPro ointment was not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. Since this was not a chronic pain case as of the date of the request, January 12, 2015, ACOEM is preferentially invoked over the MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines. As noted in the MTUS Guideline in ACOEM Chapter 3, Table 3-1, page 49, topical medications such as LidoPro are deemed "not recommended." The applicant's ongoing usage of what ACOEM 3, page 47 deems first-line oral pharmaceuticals including Neurontin, Motrin, Vicodin, etc., effectively obviating the need for the LidoPro ointment at issue. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.