

Case Number:	CM15-0029217		
Date Assigned:	02/23/2015	Date of Injury:	10/23/2013
Decision Date:	04/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	01/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	02/17/2015

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: Iowa, Illinois, Hawaii

Certification(s)/Specialty: Preventive Medicine, Occupational Medicine, Public Health & General Preventive 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 57 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on October 23, 2013. He has reported injuring his neck and ankle and also developed a left inguinal and umbilical hernia. The diagnoses have included cervical disc with radiculitis, neck pain, foot pain, ankle joint pain and inguinal hernia. Treatment to date has included diagnostic studies, surgery, physical therapy, acupuncture and medications. Currently, the injured worker complains of pain located in the neck with radiation behind the right ear. He was able to demonstrate an increased range of motion of his cervical spine, specifically with lateral rotation. He noted some relief with acupuncture treatment. On January 17, 2015 Utilization Review non-certified Naproxen 500mg #120, noting the CA MTUS Guidelines. On February 17, 2015, the injured worker submitted an application for Independent Medical Review for review of Naproxen 500mg #120.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Naproxen Tablets 500mg #120: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs Page(s): 67.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) Page(s): 67-73. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain (Chronic), Naproxen, NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs).

Decision rationale: MTUS specifies four recommendations regarding NSAID use: 1) Osteoarthritis (including knee and hip): Recommended at the lowest dose for the shortest period in patients with moderate to severe pain. 2) Back Pain; Acute exacerbations of chronic pain: Recommended as a second-line treatment after acetaminophen. In general, there is conflicting evidence that NSAIDs are more effective than acetaminophen for acute LBP. 3) Back Pain; Chronic low back pain: Recommended as an option for short-term symptomatic relief. A Cochrane review of the literature on drug relief for low back pain (LBP) suggested that NSAIDs were no more effective than other drugs such as acetaminophen, narcotic analgesics, and muscle relaxants. The review also found that NSAIDs had more adverse effects than placebo and acetaminophen but fewer effects than muscle relaxants and narcotic analgesics. 4) Neuropathic pain: There is inconsistent evidence for the use of these medications to treat long term neuropathic pain, but they may be useful to treat breakthrough and mixed pain conditions such as osteoarthritis (and other nociceptive pain) in with neuropathic pain. The treating physician does not document failure of primary (Tylenol) treatment. Progress notes do not indicate how long the patient has been on naproxen, but the MTUS guidelines recommend against long-term use. The medical documentation provided does not include functional improvement or decrease in pain related to the use of this medication. As such, the request for Naproxen Tablets 500mg #120 is not medically necessary.