

Case Number:	CM15-0041582		
Date Assigned:	03/11/2015	Date of Injury:	04/24/2002
Decision Date:	06/02/2015	UR Denial Date:	02/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/04/2015

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: Indiana

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:

This 39 year old woman sustained an industrial injury on 4/24/2002. The mechanism of injury is not detailed. Diagnoses include cervical disc protrusion, cervical radiculopathy, cervical stenosis, cervical degenerative disc disease, cervical facet joint pain, thoracic disc protrusion, thoracic radiculopathy, thoracic stenosis, thoracic degenerative disc disease, and thoracic facet joint pain. Treatment has included oral medications, acupuncture, and chiropractic treatment. Physician notes dated 11/18/2014 show complaints of bilateral cervical and thoracic spine pain with radiation to the bilateral upper extremities rated 5/10. Recommendations include cervical spine MRI, Ibuprofen, activity modification, and follow up in four weeks.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retrospective: Pharmacy Purchase of Ibuprofen 600mg #60 (DOS: 11/18/2014): Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, Ibuprofen, NSAIDs, page(s) 67-72.

Decision rationale: MTUS recommends the use of NSAIDS for the acute exacerbation of back pain at the lowest effective dose for the shortest amount of time due to the increased cardiovascular risk, renal, hepatic and GI side effects associated with long term use. MTUS states "Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil [otc], generic available): 300, 400, 600, 800 mg. Dosing: Osteoarthritis and off-label for ankylosing spondylitis: 1200 mg to 3200 mg daily. Individual patients may show no better response to 3200 mg as 2400 mg, and sufficient clinical improvement should be observed to offset potential risk of treatment with the increased dose. Higher doses are generally recommended for rheumatoid arthritis: 400-800 mg PO 3-4 times a day, use the lowest effective dose. Higher doses are usually necessary for osteoarthritis. Doses should not exceed 3200 mg/day. Mild pain to moderate pain: 400 mg PO every 4-6 hours as needed. Doses greater than 400 mg have not provided greater relief of pain." The employee has been on this medication for many months. The treating physician did not document a decrease in pain or functional improvement from the use of Ibuprofen. As such the request for Ibuprofen is not medically necessary.