

Case Number:	CM15-0068241		
Date Assigned:	04/16/2015	Date of Injury:	03/16/2012
Decision Date:	06/04/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/13/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/10/2015

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 was a 49 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury, March 16, 2012. The injured worker previously received the following treatments Norco, Terocin patches, Methoderm gel, Terocin cream, Capsaicin cream and random toxicology laboratory studies. The injured worker was diagnosed with chronic low back pain, status post lumbar surgery February 13, 2014, lumbar radiculopathy and lumbar facet syndrome. According to progress note of February 13, 2015 the injured workers chief complaint was severe low back pain and bilateral lower extremity radicular pain with numbness and tingling down both legs. The injured worker rated the pain at 9 out of 10; 0 being no pain and 10 being the worse pain. The physical exam noted tenderness with palpation along the lumbar spine and along the paravertebral muscles bilaterally. There were spasms along the paravertebral muscle of the lumbar spine bilaterally. The straight leg raises were positive bilaterally. The injured worker ambulated with an antalgic gait. The treatment plan included Flurbi (NAP) cream, Gabacyclotram Cream, Terocin Patches and Terocin cream.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Flurbi (NAP) Cream-LA 180gms: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 111-112.

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 is more than two years status post work-related injury and continues to be treated for low back and bilateral lower extremity radicular pain. When seen, there was lumbar spine and paraspinal muscle tenderness with muscle spasms and positive straight leg raising. There was an antalgic gait. Flurbi (Nap) Cream is a compounded medication containing Flurbiprofen, Lidocaine, and amitriptyline. Many agents are compounded as monotherapy or in combination for pain control such as opioids antidepressants, glutamate receptor antagonists, alpha-adrenergic receptor agonists, adenosine, cannabinoids, cholinergic receptor agonists, gaba agonists, prostanoids, bradykinin, adenosine triphosphate, biogenic amines, and nerve growth factor. There is little to no research to support the use of many these agents including amitriptyline. Compounded topical preparations of flurbiprofen are used off-label (non-FDA approved) and have not been shown to be superior to commercially available topical medications such as diclofenac. In this case, there is no evidence that the claimant has failed a trial of topical diclofenac. 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. Guidelines also recommend that when prescribing medications only one medication should be given at a time. Therefore, the requested medication is not medically necessary.

Gabacyclotram 180mgs: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 113.

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

Decision rationale: The claimant is more than two years status post work-related injury and continues to be treated for low back and bilateral lower extremity radicular pain. When seen, there was lumbar spine and paraspinal muscle tenderness with muscle spasms and positive straight leg raising. In terms of the compounded medication being prescribed, Cyclobenzaprine is a muscle relaxant and there is no evidence for the use of any muscle relaxant as a topical product. Oral Gabapentin has been shown to be effective in the treatment of painful diabetic neuropathy and postherpetic neuralgia and has been considered as a first-line treatment for neuropathic pain. Its use as a topical product is not recommended. 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. Guidelines also recommend that when prescribing medications only one medication should be given at a time. Therefore the requested compounded medication is not medically necessary.

Terocin Patches #20: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 105; 112.

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 is more than two years status post work-related injury and continues to be treated for low back and bilateral lower extremity radicular pain. When seen, there was lumbar spine and paraspinal muscle tenderness with muscle spasms and positive straight leg raising. There was an antalgic gait. Terocin contains methyl salicylate, capsaicin, menthol, and Lidocaine. Menthol and methyl salicylate are used as a topical analgesic in over the counter medications such as Ben-Gay or Icy Hot. They work by first cooling the skin then warming it up, providing a topical anesthetic and analgesic effect which may be due to interference with transmission of pain signals through nerves. Guidelines address the use of capsaicin which is believed to work through a similar mechanism. It is recommended as an option in patients who have not responded or are intolerant to other treatments. Topical lidocaine in a formulation that does not involve a dermal-patch system can be recommended for localized peripheral pain. However, guidelines also recommend that when prescribing medications only one medication should be given at a time. By prescribing a multiple combination medication, in addition to the increased risk of adverse side effects, it would not be possible to determine whether any derived benefit is due to a particular component. Therefore, this medication is not medically necessary.

Terocin 120ml: Capsaicin 0.025 percent: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page(s): 112-113.

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 is more than two years status post work-related injury and continues to be treated for low back and bilateral lower extremity radicular pain. When seen, there was lumbar spine and paraspinal muscle tenderness with muscle spasms and positive straight leg raising. There was an antalgic gait. Terocin contains methyl salicylate, capsaicin, menthol, and Lidocaine. Menthol and methyl salicylate are used as a topical analgesic in over the counter medications such as Ben-Gay or Icy Hot. They work by first cooling the skin then warming it up, providing a topical anesthetic and analgesic effect which may be due to interference with transmission of pain signals through nerves. Guidelines address the use of capsaicin which is believed to work through a similar mechanism. It is recommended as an option in patients who have not responded or are intolerant to other treatments. Topical lidocaine in a formulation that does not involve a dermal-patch system can be recommended for localized peripheral pain. However, guidelines also recommend that when prescribing medications only

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