

Case Number:	CM15-0077341		
Date Assigned:	04/28/2015	Date of Injury:	11/17/2014
Decision Date:	06/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/22/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/22/2015

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

Certification(s)/Specialty: Internal 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 61-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 11/17/14. Initial complaints include severe low back pain. Initial diagnoses include degenerative disc disease, lumbar spondylosis and sprain/strain lumbar spine. Treatments to date include medications and home exercise program. Diagnostic studies are not addressed. Current complaints include low back pain. Current diagnoses include lumbar strain. In a progress note dated 03/30/15 the treating provider reports the plan of care as medications including naproxen, pantoprazole, and Methoderm. The requested treatments are Anaprox and Methoderm.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Retrospective (03/30/15) Anaprox-DS 550mg #90: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 47, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Analgesics Page 111-113. NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) Page 67-73.

Decision rationale: Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule (MTUS) Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines addresses NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs). All NSAIDs have the U.S. Boxed Warning for associated risk of adverse cardiovascular events, including, myocardial infarction, stroke, and new onset or worsening of pre-existing hypertension. NSAIDs can cause ulcers and bleeding in the stomach and intestines at any time during treatment. Use of NSAIDs may compromise renal function. FDA package inserts for NSAIDs recommend periodic lab monitoring of a CBC complete blood count and chemistry profile including liver and renal function tests. Routine blood pressure monitoring is recommended. It is generally recommended that the lowest effective dose be used for all NSAIDs for the shortest duration of time. All NSAIDs have the potential to raise blood pressure in susceptible patients. American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) 2nd Edition (2004) indicates that nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID) can cause gastrointestinal irritation or ulceration or, less commonly, renal or allergic problems. Studies have shown that when NSAIDs are used for more than a few weeks, they can retard or impair bone, muscle, and connective tissue healing and perhaps cause hypertension. Therefore, they should be used only acutely. Medical records document a history of lumbar sprain, lumbosacral degenerative disc disorder, and lumbosacral spondylosis. The date of injury was 11/17/14. The primary treating physician's progress report dated 3/30/15 documented that while using Naproxen, GERD gastroesophageal reflux disease has developed. Per MTUS, NSAIDs can cause ulcers and bleeding in the stomach and intestines at any time during treatment. Medical records document the long-term use of NSAIDs. Per MTUS, it is generally recommended that the lowest dose be used for NSAIDs for the shortest duration of time. Long-term NSAID use is not recommended by MTUS. MTUS guidelines do not support the request for Anaprox (Naproxen). Therefore, the request for Anaprox (Naproxen) is not medically necessary.

Retrospective (03/30/15) Mentherm Ointment #120m: 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, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) Page 67-73. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Mentherm <http://www.physiciansproducts.net/product/mentherm/> <http://www.drugs.com/cdi/mentherm-cream.html>.

Decision rationale: Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule (MTUS) Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines address topical analgesics. Topical analgesics are largely experimental in use with few randomized controlled trials to determine efficacy or safety. There is little to no research to support the use of many of these agents. Any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. The efficacy in clinical trials of topical NSAIDs has been inconsistent and most studies are small and of short duration. Topical NSAIDs have been shown in meta-analysis to be either not superior to placebo after two weeks, or with a diminishing effect after two weeks. For osteoarthritis of the knee, topical NSAID effect appeared to diminish over time. There are no long-term studies of their

effectiveness or safety for chronic musculoskeletal pain. There is little evidence to utilize topical NSAIDs for treatment of osteoarthritis of the spine, hip or shoulder. Topical NSAIDs are not recommended for neuropathic pain as there is no evidence to support use. Topical treatment can result in blood concentrations and systemic effect comparable to those from oral forms, and caution should be used for patients at risk, including those with renal failure. MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines addresses NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs). All NSAIDs have the U.S. Boxed Warning for associated risk of adverse cardiovascular events, including, myocardial infarction, stroke, and new onset or worsening of pre-existing hypertension. NSAIDs can cause ulcers and bleeding in the stomach and intestines at any time during treatment. Use of NSAIDs may compromise renal function. FDA package inserts for NSAIDs recommend periodic lab monitoring of a CBC complete blood count and chemistry profile including liver and renal function tests. Routine blood pressure monitoring is recommended. It is generally recommended that the lowest effective dose be used for all NSAIDs for the shortest duration of time. American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) 2nd Edition (2004) indicates that nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID) can cause gastrointestinal irritation or ulceration or, less commonly, renal or allergic problems. Studies have shown that when NSAIDs are used for more than a few weeks, they can retard or impair bone, muscle, and connective tissue healing and perhaps cause hypertension. Therefore, they should be used only acutely. Mentherm contains Methyl Salicylate (NSAID) and Menthol. Medical records document a history of lumbar sprain, lumbosacral degenerative disc disorder, and lumbosacral spondylosis. The date of injury was 11/17/14. The primary treating physician's progress report dated 3/30/15 documented that while using Naproxen, GERD gastroesophageal reflux disease has developed. Per MTUS, NSAIDs can cause ulcers and bleeding in the stomach and intestines at any time during treatment. Medical records document the long-term use of NSAIDs. Per MTUS, it is generally recommended that the lowest dose be used for NSAIDs for the shortest duration of time. Long-term NSAID use is not recommended by MTUS. MTUS guidelines do not support the use of the topical NSAID Methyl Salicylate. Per MTUS, any compounded product that contains at least one drug (or drug class) that is not recommended is not recommended. Therefore, the use of topical Mentherm is not supported by MTUS guidelines. Therefore, the request for Mentherm ointment is not medically necessary.