

Case Number:	CM15-0078485		
Date Assigned:	04/29/2015	Date of Injury:	10/28/2011
Decision Date:	05/28/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/25/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/23/2015

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: North Carolina

Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

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 with an industrial injury dated 10/28/2011. The injured worker's diagnoses include lumbar disc displacement without myelopathy, lumbosacral spondylosis, and long term use of medication. Treatment consisted of diagnostic studies, prescribed medications, periodic follow up visits, and status post lumbar spine surgery on 5/22/2014. In a progress note dated 12/16/2014, the injured worker complained of chronic lower back pain without radicular symptoms. Objective findings revealed spasm and guarding of the lumbar spine. According to the progress note dated 2/24/2015, the injured worker reported chronic low back pain and numbness and tingling in the anterior aspect of his right thigh worsened since his last visit. Objective findings revealed antalgic gait. The treating physician prescribed Orphenadrine-Norflex ER now under review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Medication: Orphenadrine-Norflex ER RX date 12/16/14: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM, Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG).

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines muscle relaxants Page(s): 63-65.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on muscle relaxants states: Recommend non-sedating muscle relaxants with caution as a second-line option for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations in patients with chronic LBP. (Chou, 2007) (Mens, 2005) (Van Tulder, 1998) (van Tulder, 2003) (van Tulder, 2006) (Schnitzer, 2004) (See, 2008) Muscle relaxants may be effective in reducing pain and muscle tension, and increasing mobility. However, in most LBP cases, they show no benefit beyond NSAIDs in pain and overall improvement. Also there is no additional benefit shown in combination with NSAIDs. Efficacy appears to diminish over time, and prolonged use of some medications in this class may lead to dependence. (Homik, 2004) (Chou, 2004) This medication is not intended for long-term use per the California MTUS. The medication has not been prescribed for the flare-up of chronic low back pain. This is not an approved use for the medication. For these reasons, criteria for the use of this medication have not been met. Therefore the request is not medically necessary.