

Case Number:	CM15-0098525		
Date Assigned:	05/29/2015	Date of Injury:	12/09/2011
Decision Date:	07/08/2015	UR Denial Date:	04/22/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	05/21/2015

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: Texas, New York, California
 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:

The applicant is a represented 48-year-old who has filed a claim for chronic pain syndrome reportedly associated with an industrial injury of December 9, 2011. In a Utilization Review report dated April 22, 2015, the claims administrator failed to approve a request for Lovaza. The claims administrator referenced an April 8, 2015 progress note and an associated RFA form in its determination. The applicant's attorney subsequently appealed. On April 8, 2015, the applicant reported ongoing issues with abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, reflux, and hypertension. The attending provider stated that the applicant's hypertension was unchanged while the applicant's reflux was improved. The applicant's blood pressure was 130/91. The applicant was obese, standing 5 feet 6 inches tall and weighing 200 pounds. The applicant was given a diagnosis of dyslipidemia, it was stated in the diagnosis section of the note. Hydrochlorothiazide, Zestril, Tenormin, Dexilant, Gaviscon, MiraLax, Lovaza, and Sentra were endorsed. The applicant was also using oxycodone, apparently furnished by another prescriber, the treating provider reported. Multiple consultations were ordered.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Lovaza 1 month supply 4g daily with 2 refills: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 3 Initial Approaches to Treatment Page(s): 47. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Food and Drug Administration INDICATIONS AND USAGE LOVAZA is a combination of ethyl esters of omega 3 fatty acids, principally EPA and DHA, indicated as an adjunct to diet to reduce triglyceride (TG) levels in adult patients with severe (500 mg/dL) hypertriglyceridemia.

Decision rationale: No, the request for Lovaza, a lipid-regulating agent, was not medically necessary, medically appropriate, or indicated here. The MTUS Guideline in ACOEM Chapter 3, page 47 stipulates that an attending provider incorporate some discussion of efficacy of medication for the particular condition for which it has been prescribed in order to ensure proper usage and so as to manage expectations. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notes that Lovaza is indicated in the treatment of adult applicants with severe hypertriglyceridemia with triglyceride levels greater than 500. Here, however, the attending provider did not attach the result of recent laboratory testing. The attending provider did not establish a diagnosis of hypertriglyceridemia. The attending provider did not state whether or not ongoing usage of Lovaza had or had not reduced the applicant's triglyceride levels. Therefore, the request was not medically necessary.