

Case Number:	CM14-0133213		
Date Assigned:	09/18/2014	Date of Injury:	03/20/2013
Decision Date:	11/17/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/07/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/20/2014

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. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Preventive Medicine, has a subspecialty in Occupational Medicine and is licensed to practice in Iowa. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 patient is a 59 year old female employee with date of injury of 3/20/2013. A review of the medical records indicate that the patient is undergoing treatment for status post left knee surgery on 12/9/2013, low back strain, persistent left knee arthralgia and patellofemoral chondromalacia patella, left knee degenerative joint disease. Subjective complaints include pain in left knee, gastrointestinal difficulties from anti-inflammatories or analgesics. She did get some relief from an interarticular injection of corticosteroid injection for the left knee on 6/1/2014. She says she gets an irritated stomach from oral anti-inflammatories or analgesics. Objective findings include a left knee exam which revealed scars from surgery, with good healing; range of motion 0-130; quadriceps and hamstring strength 5/5; painful patellofemoral crepitus with motion, but no patellar instability. There was tenderness in the paraspinal musculature of the lumbar spine. She has decreased range of motion, especially with extension. She has a negative straight leg test bilaterally. Treatment has included steroid injection in left knee. Medications have included topical Flurbiprofen and tramadol cream which helps with the pain by 50%. The utilization review dated 8/7/2014 non-certified the request for Topical Compound Cream Flurbiprofen 20%/Tramadol 20%/in balse 210g.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Topical Compound Cream Flurbiprofen 20%/tramadol 20%/in balse 210g: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Topical Compounding Medications.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Guidelines Topical Analgesic Page(s): 111-113. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain, Compound creams

Decision rationale: MTUS and ODG recommend usage of topical analgesics as an option, but also further details "primarily recommended for neuropathic pain when trials of antidepressants and anticonvulsants have failed." The medical documents do not indicate failure of antidepressants or anticonvulsants. MTUS states, "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." MTUS states that the only FDA- approved NSAID medication for topical use includes Diclofenac, which is indicated for relief of osteoarthritis pain in joints. Flurbiprofen would not be indicated for topical use in this case. MTUS states that the only FDA- approved NSAID medication for topical use includes Diclofenac, which is indicated for relief of osteoarthritis pain in joints. Tramadol would not be indicated for topical use in this case.