MAXIMUS Federal Services

Case Number:	CM13-0001651		
Date Assigned:	03/03/2014	Date of Injury:	09/28/2009
Decision Date:	04/11/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/03/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/16/2013

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 Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and Pain Management, has a subspecialty in Interventional Spine and is licensed to practice in California. 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:

The patient is a 38 year-old female with a date of injury of 09/28/2009. The listed diagnoses per [redacted]. are: 1) RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy) lower extremity 2) Chronic pain syndrome 3) Classical migraine 4) Asthma 5) GERD (Gastro esophageal Reflux Disease) 6) Neuralgia, neuritis and radiculitis 7) Abnormality of gait 8) COAT 9) Anxiety, depression, insomnia According to report dated 06/26/2013 by [redacted]., the patient presents with moderate-severe back pain and RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy) pain. Patient reports she was in a two-three week flare up which left her crying and in bed and "stopped eating altogether." She was recently introduced to a Rife machine by a friend. Patient reports she "became almost pain free" on the first day of use. On the second exposure, she was able to walk around the house "almost like normal" and had better sleep than she had in years. Provider is requesting a Rife machine, stating "it appears not to cost any more than a TENS and probably much less than an H-wave." The provider goes on to state, "it may not be in the Guidelines but this is worth a try."

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

RIFE GENERATOR: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 5 Cornerstones of Disability Prevention and Management Page(s): 79. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation and Biowaves.com, section entitled Royal Raymond Rife and the Rife Frequency Generator

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation ACOEM American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, page 491 and other medical treatment guideline or medical evidence; www.rifemachine.com

Decision rationale: This patient presents with chronic back pain and RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy). The treating Doctor is requesting a Rife machine. The MTUS, ACOEM and ODG guidelines do not discuss RIFE machines. However, a search on the web on www.rifemachine.com states this device delivers "audio frequency" to the body. "The Rife machine therefore is an instrument that delivers energy to the body as a stimulus to the user; this may at the same time, provide a destructive environment to all kinds of pathogens." The website goes on to further state, "most Rife machines are intended for home remedy, and are not approved for medical use. Doctors are not allowed to use them in their practice. These regulations do not apply to private users. Obviously, users must not do anything with the machine that might be construed as practicing medicine." ACOEM guidelines have the following regarding evidence based medicine on page 491. "Evidence based medicine focuses on the need for health care providers to rely on a critical appraisal of available scientific evidence rather than clinical opinion or anecdotal reports in reaching decisions regarding diagnosis, treatment, causation, and other aspects of health care decision making. This mandates that information regarding health outcomes in study populations or experimental groups be extracted from the medical literature, after which it can be analyzed, synthesized, and applied to individual patients." In this case, there is no medical evidence for this machine. There is no medical basis for the device as it is unclear what the machine actually does, what outcome it is to produce, or how effective it is in helping chronic pain. The home page for this unit does not consider this treatment for medical use. Therefore, the request for RIFE generator is not medically necessary and appropriate.