

Case Number:	CM13-0053169		
Date Assigned:	12/30/2013	Date of Injury:	05/20/2002
Decision Date:	06/30/2014	UR Denial Date:	10/17/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	11/18/2013

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, 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 36-year-old with an injury date on 5/20/02. Based on the 9/25/13 progress report provided by the treating physician, the diagnoses are: 1. Osteonecrosis multiple foci, 2. iatrogenic Cushing's syndrome, 3. Thoracic Outlet Syndrome, 4. Discogenic Cervical Radiculopathy, 5. Mechanical Neck Pain Syndrome, 6. Loss of Motion Segment Integrity/Laxity of Ligament, Cervical Spine, 7. Discogenic Sciatic Radiculopathy 8. Mechanical Low Back Pain Syndrome, 9. Loss of Motion Segment Integrity, Lumbar Spine 10. Abnormal Posture/Flexion Antalgia. The exam on 9/25/13 showed "significant forward carriage of head, neck, shoulders and flexion antalgia at lumbosacral junction. Paravertebral muscle spasm from L5 through lower thoracic spine and from T4 through occiput. Pain to palpation in trapezius, levator scapula, rhomboid musculature, as well as to anterior aspect C-spine over scalene muscles down C7-C8 distribution right > left." The physician is requesting additional 6 sessions of therastim over sacral plexus. The utilization review determination being challenged is dated 10/17/13. The physician is the requesting provider, and he provided treatment reports from 2/22/13 to 2/6/14.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

ADDITIONAL 6 SESSIONS OF THERASTIM OVER SACRAL PLEXUS: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation MTUS Guidelines, Neuromuscular Stimulation, page 121.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Neuromuscular electrical stimulation Page(s): 121.

Decision rationale: This patient presents with swelling and stiffness in upper extremities and hands, in addition to severe constipation. The treating physician has asked additional 6 sessions of Therastim over sacral plexus on 9/25/13 . Patient has facial swelling and severe constipation, only relieved by Therastim and massage according to the 4/16/13 report. On 8/8/13, the patient reports nerve pain improved by massage, but pain has not interfered with functional capacity. On 8/15/13, the patient experiences a flare up in nerve pain that makes activities of daily living difficult. On 8/20/13, the patient has tried home exercises but it increases pain in upper back/neck. Review of the report shows no prior neuromuscular stimulation in patient's history. Regarding neuromuscular electrical stimulation, the MTUS guidelines recommends as part of rehabilitative treatment program for stroke, but not indicated for chronic pain. In this case, patient has chronic nerve pain for which requested neuromuscular stimulation is not indicated by the guidelines. The request is not medically necessary and appropriate.