

Case Number:	CM14-0039088		
Date Assigned:	06/27/2014	Date of Injury:	07/27/2012
Decision Date:	09/05/2014	UR Denial Date:	03/19/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	04/03/2014

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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management, 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 31-year-old male with a 7/27/12 date of injury. At the time (3/10/14) of the request for authorization for TENS unit and supplies x 2 months rental trial for the left shoulder, there is documentation of subjective (ongoing pain to his left shoulder; ongoing low back pain with sciatic; burning, numbness and tingling down his right lower extremity) and objective (range of motion to forward flexion 150 degrees, abduction 100 degrees, internal rotation brings his thumb to L3, external rotation 50 degrees, and strength 3/5) findings, current diagnoses (left shoulder impingement syndrome status post left shoulder arthroscopy and spondylolisthesis of the lumbosacral spine at L5-S1, rule out bilateral L4-5 and L5-S1 radiculopathy, right worse than left), and treatment to date (medication, physical therapy, and TENS unit). There is no documentation of how often the unit was used, outcomes in terms of pain relief and function, and other ongoing pain treatment during the trial period (including medication use).

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

TENS unit and supplies x 2 months rental trial for the left shoulder: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous electrotherapy.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) Page(s): 113-117.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies documentation of pain of at least three months duration, evidence that other appropriate pain modalities have been tried (including medication) and failed, a statement identifying that the TENS unit will be used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, and a treatment plan including the specific short- and long-term goals of treatment with the TENS, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of a month trial of a TENS unit. In addition, MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies documentation of how often the unit was used, outcomes in terms of pain relief and function, and other ongoing pain treatment during the trial period (including medication use), as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of continued TENS unit. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of diagnoses of left shoulder impingement syndrome status post left shoulder arthroscopy and spondylolisthesis of the lumbosacral spine at L5-S1, rule out bilateral L4-5 and L5-S1 radiculopathy, right worse than left. In addition, there is documentation of treatment with a TENS unit. However, there is no documentation of how often the unit was used, outcomes in terms of pain relief and function, and other ongoing pain treatment during the trial period (including medication use). Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for TENS unit and supplies x 2 months rental trial for the left shoulder is not medically necessary.