

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0073042		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/16/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	04/18/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	09/09/2014	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/05/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	05/20/2014

### 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 Neurology, has a subspecialty in Neuromuscular Medicine and is licensed to practice in New Jersey. 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 26-year-old woman who sustained a work related injury on April 18, 2013. Subsequently, she developed a chronic low back pain. She had a lumbar spine x-rays dated March 14, 2013 showed mild scoliotic curvature and possible mild narrowing at L5-S1 disc level. Her lumbar spine MRI dated June 7, 2013 showed L5-S1 5 mm disc bulge. According to a note dated on June 18, 2014, the patient's objective findings included non focal neurological examination and the right calf measures significantly smaller than the left. The patient was diagnosed with lumbar degenerative disc disease, lumbar radiculopathy, and scoliosis, nonindustrial. The patient was treated conservatively with NSAIDs, physical therapy, and work modification. She also underwent spinal injections on November 25, 2013 and additional ESI on January 27, 2014. She had minimal to no improvement. On April 14, 2014, she did undergo trigger point injections with 50% relief. Additional trigger point injections were requested. The provider requested authorization for Bilateral lumbar paraspinal MTPs (myofascial trigger point injections).

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Bilateral lumbar paraspinal MTPs (myofascial trigger point injections) #6:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for the use of trigger point injections.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines < Trigger point injections Page(s): 122.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, trigger point injection is recommended only for myofascial pain syndrome as indicated below, with limited lasting value. Not recommended for radicular pain. Trigger point injections with an anesthetic such as bupivacaine are recommended for non-resolving trigger points, but the addition of a corticosteroid is not generally recommended. Not recommended for radicular pain. A trigger point is a discrete focal tenderness located in a palpable taut band of skeletal muscle, which produces a local twitch in response to stimulus to the band. Trigger points may be present in up to 33-50% of the adult population. Myofascial pain syndrome is a regional painful muscle condition with a direct relationship between a specific trigger point and its associated pain region. These injections may occasionally be necessary to maintain function in those with myofascial problems when myofascial trigger points are present on examination. Not recommended for typical back pain or neck pain. (Graff-Radford, 2004) (Nelemans-Cochrane, 2002) For fibromyalgia syndrome, trigger point injections have not been proven effective. (Goldenberg, 2004). Trigger point injections with a local anesthetic may be recommended for the treatment of chronic low back or neck pain with myofascial pain syndrome when all of the following criteria are met: (1) Documentation of circumscribed trigger points with evidence upon palpation of a twitch response as well as referred pain; (2) Symptoms have persisted for more than three months; (3) Medical management therapies such as ongoing stretching exercises, physical therapy, NSAIDs and muscle relaxants have failed to control pain; (4) Radiculopathy is not present (by exam, imaging, or neuro-testing); (5) Not more than 3-4 injections per session; (6) No repeat injections unless a greater than 50% pain relief is obtained for six weeks after an injection and there is documented evidence of functional improvement; (7) Frequency should not be at an interval less than two months; (8) Trigger point injections with any substance (e.g., saline or glucose) other than local anesthetic with or without steroid are not recommended. In this case, the patient is treating for myofascial pain of the lumbar spine. She was previously received trigger point injections, which provided 50% symptom relief for about 10 days. There is no documented evidence of functional improvement for a minimum of six weeks to justify repeat injections. Therefore, the Bilateral Lumbar Paraspinal MTPs (myofascial trigger point injections) #6 is not medically necessary.