

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0196526		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	12/04/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/28/2010
<b>Decision Date:</b>	01/16/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	11/18/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	11/24/2014

### 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 52-year-old woman who sustained a work-related injury on December 28, 2010. Subsequently, the patient developed right shoulder and neck pain. On January 9, 2014, the patient underwent a right shoulder surgery and had post-operative physical therapy with some improvement. According to the progress report dated October 2, 2014, the patient reported ongoing pain in neck and right shoulder. She was also starting to have left shoulder pain due to compensatory reasons. She rated her pain as a 4-5/10. Examination of the cervical spine revealed mild cervical paraspinal tenderness to palpation with myofascial tightness. She had more tightness on the left side compared to the right side. Examination of the right shoulder revealed tenderness to palpation over the acromioclavicular joint. She also had pain with range of motion of extension, flexion, and abduction. Examination of the left shoulder revealed myofascial tightness over the left scapular area as well as over the rhomboid musculature. She had multiple tender points. The patient was diagnosed with right shoulder rotator cuff injury, status post right shoulder surgery, cervical sprain/strain injury, and myofascial pain syndrome. The progress report dated October 30, 2014 documented the patient continued to have pain and discomfort. There were multiple myofascial trigger points at right shoulder, neck, and muscle girdle. The provider requested authorization for 8 Trigger point injection two times a week for four weeks to the cervical paraspinal musculature.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**8 Trigger point injection two times a week for four weeks to the cervical paraspinal musculature: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

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

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, trigger point injections are 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. For fibromyalgia syndrome, trigger point injections have not been proven effective. 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. There is no clear evidence of myofascial pain and trigger points over the cervical paraspinal musculature. There is no documentation of failure of oral medications or physical therapy in this case. Therefore, the request for 8 trigger point injection two times a week for four weeks to the cervical paraspinal musculature is not medically necessary.

**Myofascial release: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** The Claims Administrator did not cite any medical evidence for its decision.

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

**Decision rationale:** There is no documentation that the patient has myofascial pain or identification of myofascial trigger points. In addition there is no clear documentation that the patient failed first line oral medications. Therefore, the prescription of myofascial release is not medically necessary.