

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0045419		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/02/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	03/23/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	04/08/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	02/25/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/01/2014

### 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. 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/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:  
 State(s) of Licensure: Texas, California  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

### CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

This is a 39 year old male patient who sustained in industrial injury on 03/23/11. Diagnoses include status post slip and fall injuring his right knee, thigh, calf, ankle, and foot, right knee derangement with some improvement, and L4-S1 radiculopathy to the right lower extremity. Per the progress note dated 02/19/15, he had complaints of low back pain with radiation to the right lower extremity. The physical examination revealed positive straight leg raising on the right side, antalgic gait, weakness in the right lower extremity and decreased range of motion of the lumbar spine. The medications list includes gabapentin, tramadol, naproxen and omeprazole. He has had multiple diagnostic studies including lumbar MRI, right knee MRI, right foot MRI and EMG/NCS of the lower extremities. He has had physical therapy for this injury. On 02/25/14 Utilization Review non-certified an interferential unit and supplies, with no citations provided in the submitted documentation.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Interspec IF II (Interferential) Unit and supplies for the right leg and ankle: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Interferential Current Stimulation (ICS) Page(s): 118, 120.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines  
Interferential Current Stimulation (ICS) Page(s): 118-120..

**Decision rationale:** Request: Interspec IF II (Interferential) Unit and supplies for the right leg and ankle. Per the CA MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines, Interferential Current Stimulation (ICS) is "Not recommended as an isolated intervention. There is no quality evidence of effectiveness except in conjunction with recommended treatments, including return to work, exercise and medications, and limited evidence of improvement on those recommended treatments alone. "Per the cited guideline, " while not recommended as an isolated intervention, Patient selection criteria if Interferential stimulation is to be used anyway: Possibly appropriate for the following conditions if it has documented and proven to be effective as directed or applied by the physician or a provider licensed to provide physical medicine: Pain is ineffectively controlled due to diminished effectiveness of medications; or Pain is ineffectively controlled with medications due to side effects; or History of substance abuse; or Significant pain from postoperative conditions limits the ability to perform exercise programs/physical therapy treatment; or Unresponsive to conservative measures (e.g., repositioning, heat/ice, etc.). If those criteria are met, then a one-month trial may be appropriate to permit the physician and physical medicine provider to study the effects and benefits. There should be evidence of increased functional improvement, less reported pain and evidence of medication reduction." There is no evidence of failure of conservative measures like physical therapy or pharmacotherapy for this patient. Any evidence of diminished effectiveness of medications or intolerance to medications or history of substance abuse is not specified in the records provided. The medical necessity of Interspec IF II (Interferential) Unit and supplies for the right leg and ankle is not fully established for this patient at this juncture.