

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM14-0047096		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	07/02/2014	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	12/15/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/01/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	04/04/2014
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/15/2014

### 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: New Jersey, Michigan, California  
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Neurology, Neuromuscular Medicine

### 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 injured worker is a 47-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 12/15/11. Initial complaints and diagnoses are not available. Treatments to date include medications, protective volar wrist abrasion and elbow pad. Diagnostic studies include a nerve conduction study. Current complaints include shooting pain from the right carpal tunnel area, radiating up to the volar forearm, up the lateral arm and to the shoulder. In a progress note dated 03/26/14 the treating provider reports the plan of care as contused use of the protective volar wrist abrasion and elbow pad, anti-inflammatory, and repeat of the nerve conduction studies. The requested treatments are nerve conduction studies of the right upper extremity.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Electromyography (EMG) of the right upper extremity:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 178.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 269.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, (MTUS page 303 from ACOEM guidelines), “Electromyography (EMG), including H-reflex tests, may be useful to identify subtle, focal neurologic dysfunction in patients with low back symptoms lasting more than three or four weeks.” EMG has excellent ability to identify abnormalities related to disc protrusion (MTUS page 304 from ACOEM guidelines). According to MTUS guidelines, needle EMG study helps identify subtle neurological focal dysfunction in patients with neck and arm symptoms. “When the neurologic examination is less clear, however, further physiologic evidence of nerve dysfunction can be obtained before ordering an imaging study Electromyography (EMG), and nerve conduction velocities (NCV), including H-reflex tests, may help identify subtle focal neurologic dysfunction in patients with neck or arm symptoms, or both, lasting more than three or four weeks (page 178).” EMG is indicated to clarify nerve dysfunction in case of suspected disc herniation (page 182). EMG is useful to identify physiological insult and anatomical defect in case of neck pain. (page 179) There is no documentation of new onset of peripheral nerve damage, cervical radiculopathy and/or entrapment neuropathy that requires a second electro diagnostic testing. There is no documentation of significant change in the patient condition. Therefore, the request for Electromyography (EMG) of the right upper extremity is not medically necessary.

**Nerve conduction study (NCS) of the right upper extremity:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 8 Neck and Upper Back Complaints Page(s): 178.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 11 Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints Page(s): 269.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines, (MTUS page 303 from ACOEM guidelines), “Electromyography (EMG), including H-reflex tests, may be useful to identify subtle, focal neurologic dysfunction in patients with low back symptoms lasting more than three or four weeks.” EMG has excellent ability to identify abnormalities related to disc protrusion (MTUS page 304 from ACOEM guidelines). According to MTUS guidelines, needle EMG study helps identify subtle neurological focal dysfunction in patients with neck and arm symptoms. “ When the neurologic examination is less clear, however, further physiologic evidence of nerve dysfunction can be obtained before ordering an imaging study Electromyography (EMG), and nerve conduction velocities (NCV), including H-reflex tests, may help identify subtle focal neurologic dysfunction in patients with neck or arm symptoms, or both, lasting more than three or four weeks (page 178).” EMG is indicated to clarify nerve dysfunction in case of suspected disc herniation (page 182). EMG is useful to identify physiological insult and anatomical defect in case of neck pain. (page 179) There is no documentation of new onset of peripheral nerve damage, cervical radiculopathy and/or entrapment neuropathy that requires a second electro diagnostic testing. There is no documentation of significant change in the patient condition. Therefore, the request for Nerve conduction study (NCS) of the right upper extremity is not medically necessary.

