

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0008966		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	01/28/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	09/14/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	03/23/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/14/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	01/15/2015

### 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 42 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 9/14/2013. The diagnoses have included cervical sprain/strain, lumbar sprain/strain, radiculitis, myofascitis, and stress/anxiety. Treatment to date has included acupuncture, shock wave therapy, medications, diagnostic testing and activity modifications. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the cervical and lumbar spine dated 12/16/2014 showed L5-S1 disc of normal height and hydration, C5-C6 1.1mm disc protrusion in neutral only and a patent central spinal canal and neural foramina, left adnexal cyst. Currently, the IW complains of constant moderate stiff achy sharp neck pain and severe low back pain described as achy, sharp, burning, and tingling and rated as 8/10. On 1/14/2015, Utilization Review non-certified a request for EMG (electromyography)/NCV (nerve conduction studies) of the left upper extremity noting that the clinical findings do not support the medical necessity of the treatment. The ACOEM Guidelines were cited. On 1/15/2015, the injured worker submitted an application for IMR for review of EMG (electromyography)/NCV (nerve conduction studies) of the left upper extremity.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**1 EMG/NCV for the Left Upper Extremity as an Outpatient: Upheld**

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints.

**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 peripheral nerve damage, cervical radiculopathy and entrapment neuropathy that requires electrodiagnostic testing. There is no documentation of significant change in the patient condition. Therefore, the request for EMG/NCV for the Left Upper Extremity as an Outpatient is not medically necessary.