

Case Number:	CM15-0133592		
Date Assigned:	07/21/2015	Date of Injury:	03/30/2010
Decision Date:	08/18/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/17/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/10/2015

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: North Carolina
 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:

The injured worker is a 61-year-old male who sustained an industrial injury on 3/30/10. Most recent progress report dated 7/16/14 reports continued complaints of right shoulder, low back, bilateral knee and right ankle pain. The low back pain is constant sharp and radiates into the lower extremities. The pain is worsening, rated 8/10. The knee pain is throbbing and is rated 6/10. The right ankle pain is dull and throbbing and is rated 5/10. Diagnoses include right shoulder impingement rotator cuff tendinitis, scarring and bursitis, lumbar discopathy, status post left knee arthroscopy, and status post right knee surgery and partial split tear of tendinosis right ankle. Plan of care includes: conservative treatments have failed; lumbar surgery was discussed in detail. Work status: retired. Follow up in 2 weeks. Request for extended rental of TENS unit dated 2/18/14.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

One month home-based trial of neurostimulator TENS -EMS with supplies (retro unknown DOS): Overturned

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation TENS.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS Page(s): 114.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation states: TENS, chronic pain (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) Not recommended as a primary treatment modality, but a one-month home-based TENS trial may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option, if used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, for the conditions described below. While TENS may reflect the long-standing accepted standard of care within many medical communities, the results of studies are inconclusive; the published trials do not provide information on the stimulation parameters, which are most likely to provide optimum pain relief, nor do they answer questions about long-term effectiveness. (Carroll-Cochrane, 2001) Several published evidence-based assessments of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) have found that evidence is lacking concerning effectiveness. One problem with current studies is that many only evaluated single-dose treatment, which may not reflect the use of this modality in a clinical setting. Other problems include statistical methodology, small sample size, influence of placebo effect, and difficulty comparing the different outcomes that were measured. This treatment option is recommended as an adjunct to a program of evidence based functional restoration. Criteria for a one-month trial has been met and the request is medically necessary.

Extended rental of neurostimulator TENS-EMS x 12 months (retro unknown DOS):
Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation TENS.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS Page(s): 114.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation states: TENS, chronic pain (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) Not recommended as a primary treatment modality, but a one-month home-based TENS trial may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option, if used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, for the conditions described below. While TENS may reflect the long-standing accepted standard of care within many medical communities, the results of studies are inconclusive; the published trials do not provide information on the stimulation parameters, which are most likely to provide optimum pain relief, nor do they answer questions about long-term effectiveness. (Carroll-Cochrane, 2001) Several published evidence-based assessments of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) have found that evidence is lacking concerning effectiveness. One problem with current studies is that many only evaluated single-dose treatment, which may not reflect the use of this modality in a clinical setting. Other problems include statistical methodology, small sample size, influence of placebo effect, and difficulty comparing the different outcomes that were measured. This treatment option is recommended as an adjunct to a program of evidence based functional restoration. In addition, there must be a 30-day trial with objective measurements of

improvement. These criteria have not been met in the review of the provided clinical documentation and the request is not medically necessary.