

Case Number:	CM15-0180610		
Date Assigned:	09/22/2015	Date of Injury:	08/02/2014
Decision Date:	10/26/2015	UR Denial Date:	09/03/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/14/2015

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: California

Certification(s)/Specialty: Emergency 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 45 year old female who sustained an industrial injury on 8-2-2014. A review of medical records indicates the injured worker is being treated for cervical sprain strain, shoulder sprain strain, status post right shoulder surgery, and lumbar sprain strain. Medical record dated 8-5-2015 noted ongoing pain and stiffness to the neck, left shoulder, right shoulder, and lumbar spine. Physical examination noted tenderness, spasm and decreased range of motion to the cervical and lumbar spine. There was tenderness and decreased range of motion to the shoulder. Treatment has included surgery, Tramadol, creams, and Flexeril. The utilization form dated 9-3-2015 noncertified EMG-NCS of the bilateral upper extremity.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

EMG/NCS of the bilateral upper extremity: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Neck and Upper Back Complaints 2004, and Forearm, Wrist, and Hand Complaints 2004. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Neck and Upper Back Complaints 2004, Section(s): Special Studies.

Decision rationale: The requested EMG/NCS of the bilateral upper extremity is not medically necessary. American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), 2nd Edition, (2004), Chapter 8, Neck and Upper Back Complaints, page 177-179, Special Studies and Diagnostic and Treatment Considerations, Special Studies and Diagnostic and Treatment Considerations, note "Unequivocal objective findings that identify specific nerve compromise on the neurologic examination are sufficient evidence to warrant imaging in patients who do not respond to treatment and who would consider surgery an option. When the neurologic examination is less clear, however, further physiologic evidence of nerve dysfunction should be obtained before ordering an imaging study." The injured worker has pain and stiffness to the neck, left shoulder, right shoulder, and lumbar spine. Physical examination noted tenderness, spasm and decreased range of motion to the cervical and lumbar spine. There was tenderness and decreased range of motion to the shoulder. The treating physician has not documented physical exam findings indicative of nerve compromise such as a positive Sturling test or deficits in dermatomal sensation, reflexes or muscle strength nor positive provocative neurologic exam tests. The treating physician has not documented an acute clinical change since the date of previous electrodiagnostic testing. The criteria noted above not having been met, EMG/NCS of the bilateral upper extremity is not medically necessary.