

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0030811		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	02/24/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	06/14/2013
<b>Decision Date:</b>	04/03/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	01/20/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	02/19/2015

### 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, Indiana, New York  
Certification(s)/Specialty: Internal 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 29 year old female, who sustained an industrial injury on June 14, 2013. The mechanism of injury is unknown. The diagnoses have included right carpal tunnel syndrome. Treatment to date has included surgery, physical therapy, massage and medication. On August 12, 2014, the injured worker complained of occasional aching, burning and stabbing pain that begins in her right wrist and radiates up her right forearm. She reported that she noticed some improvement since her right carpal tunnel release on June 16, 2014. On January 21, 2015, Utilization Review modified a request for TENS unit 6 month trial with supplies/rental to TENS unit 1 month trial with supplies/rental, noting the CA MTUS Guidelines. On February 19, 2015, the injured worker submitted an application for Independent Medical Review for review of TENS unit 6 month trial with supplies/rental.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**TENS unit 6 month trial with supplies/rental:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Page(s): 114.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS Unit Page(s): 116. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain section, TENS.

**Decision rationale:** Pursuant to the Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines and the Official Disability Guidelines, TENS unit six month trial with supplies, rental, is not medically necessary. TENS is not recommended as a primary treatment modality, but a one-month home-based trial may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option, if used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, including reductions in medication use. The Official Disability Guidelines enumerate the criteria for the use of TENS. The criteria include, but are not limited to, a one month trial period of the TENS trial should be documented with documentation of how often the unit was used as well as outcomes in terms of pain relief and function; there is evidence that appropriate pain modalities have been tried and failed; other ongoing pain treatment should be documented during the trial including medication usage; specific short and long-term goals should be submitted; etc. See the guidelines for additional details. In this case, the injured worker's working diagnosis is right carpal tunnel syndrome. The most recent progress note in the medical record is dated July 10, 2014. The criteria for TENS unit includes a one month home based trial with documentation of how often the unit was used as well as outcomes in terms of pain relief and function. Additional criteria include short and long-term goals. The requesting physician ordered a six-month clinical trial. The guidelines recommend a one-month trial. Additionally, TENS is not recommended for carpal tunnel syndrome, although the clinical indication is not documented in the medical record. Consequently, absent clinical documentation supporting the recommended guidelines of a one-month TENS clinical trial along with a clinical indication for its use, TENS unit six month trial with supplies, rental, is not medically necessary.