

Case Number:	CM15-0048840		
Date Assigned:	03/20/2015	Date of Injury:	02/28/2013
Decision Date:	05/01/2015	UR Denial Date:	03/10/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	03/16/2015

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 47-year-old female, who sustained an industrial injury on 02/28/2013. She has reported subsequent neck and arm pain and was diagnosed with neck strain and cervical disc degeneration. Treatment to date has included oral and topical pain medication. In a progress note dated 02/18/2015, the injured worker complained of neck and left elbow/wrist pain. Objective findings were illegible. The physician noted that Zanaflex and an interferential unit would be requested.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

INTERFERENTIAL STIMULATION UNIT: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Interferential Current Stimulation Page(s): 118-119.

Decision rationale: According to MTUS guidelines, "Interferential Current Stimulation (ICS). Not recommended as an isolated intervention. There is no quality evidence of effectiveness except in conjunction with recommended treatments, including return to work, exercise and medications, and limited evidence of improvement on those recommended treatments alone. The randomized trials that have evaluated the effectiveness of this treatment have included studies for back pain, jaw pain, soft tissue shoulder pain, cervical neck pain and post-operative knee pain. (Van der Heijden, 1999)(Werner, 1999) (Hurley, 2001) (Hou, 2002) (Jarit, 2003) (Hurley, 2004) (CTAF, 2005)(Burch, 2008) The findings from these trials were either negative or non-interpretable for recommendation due to poor study design and/or methodologic issues. While not recommended as an isolated intervention, Patient selection criteria if Interferential stimulation is to be used anyway: Possibly appropriate for the following conditions if it has documented and proven to be effective as directed or applied by the physician or a provider licensed to provide physical medicine: Pain is ineffectively controlled due to diminished effectiveness of medications; or Pain is ineffectively controlled with medications due to side effects; or History of substance abuse; or Significant pain from postoperative conditions limits the ability to perform exercise programs/physical therapy treatment; or Unresponsive to conservative measures (e.g., repositioning, heat/ice, etc.)." There is no clear evidence that the patient did not respond to conservative therapies, or have pain that limit her ability to perform physical therapy. There is no clear evidence that the neurostimulator will be used as a part of a rehabilitation program. There is no documentation of the outcome of previous physical therapy. Therefore, the request for interferential stimulation unit is not medically necessary.

ZANAFLEX 2MG QTY 30: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines MUSCLE RELAXANTS.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Muscle relaxants Page(s): 63.

Decision rationale: According to MTUS guidelines, non-sedating muscle relaxants are recommended with caution as a second line option for short-term treatment of acute exacerbations in patients with chronic lumbosacral pain. Efficacy appears to diminish over time and prolonged use may cause dependence. There is no continuous and objective documentation of the effect of the drug on patient pain, spasm and function. There is no recent documentation for recent pain exacerbation or failure of first line treatment medication. Therefore, the request for Zanaflex 2mg #30 is not medically necessary.