

Case Number:	CM14-0118980		
Date Assigned:	08/06/2014	Date of Injury:	01/21/2014
Decision Date:	09/30/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/18/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/29/2014

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. The expert reviewer is Board Certified in Family Practice, and is licensed to practice in Texas and Mississippi. 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/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

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 58-year-old female who reported an injury on 1/21/2014 due to an unknown mechanism. Diagnoses were partial tear of rotator cuff, pain and joint involving shoulder region, and bicipital tenosynovitis. Past treatments were medications, and physical therapy. Diagnostic studies were MRI of the right shoulder. Surgical history was right shoulder rotator cuff repair. Physical examination on 08/07/2014 revealed complaints of significant low back pain but radiculopathy was improved with the epidural injection. Examination of the spine revealed limited range of motion with a positive straight leg raising. The injured worker used a TENS unit at home for 1 month with documented increased functional gains. The injured worker reported, "The H Wave helped me to relax at night so I can get some sleep." The injured worker was utilizing the home H wave 4 times per day, 7 days a week, less than 30 minutes per session. The injured worker could not take narcotic medication. Medications were not reported. Treatment plan was for the purchase or rental of a TENS unit/electrical stimulation unit for the right shoulder. The rational and request for authorization were not submitted.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Purchase or rental of TENS unit/electrical stimulation unit for the right shoulder: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS, chronic pain (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation); Criteria for the use of TENS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation The official Disability Duration Guidelines, Treatment

in Workers Compensation, 2014 web-based edition;
http://www.dir.ca.gov/t8/ch4_5sbia5_5_2.html.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines
Transcutaneous Electrotherapy Page(s): 113, 116.

Decision rationale: The request for Purchase or rental of TENS unit/electrical stimulation unit for the right shoulder is not medically necessary. The California Medical Treatment Utilization Schedule states transcutaneous electrotherapy is therapeutic use of electricity and is another modality that can be used in the treatment of pain. Transcutaneous electrotherapy is the most common form of electrotherapy where electrical stimulation is applied to the surface of the skin. Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation is recommended as a treatment option for acute postoperative pain in the first 30 days post-surgery. Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulations (TENS) appears to be most effective for mild to moderate thoracotomy pain. It has been shown to be of lesser effect or not at all for other orthopedic surgical procedures. The medical guidelines do not support the use of a TENS unit 30 days post-surgery. Therefore, the request is not medically necessary.