

Case Number:	CM14-0128901		
Date Assigned:	09/05/2014	Date of Injury:	01/09/2013
Decision Date:	11/04/2014	UR Denial Date:	07/11/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/13/2014

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 Anesthesiology, has a subspecialty in Pain Management and is licensed to practice in California. 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:

According to the records made available for review, this is a 67-year-old female with a 1/9/13 date of injury. At the time (7/11/14) of Decision for Trial of Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator (TENS) with supplies, 30 day rental, for the upper back and neck and Follow up visit for the upper back and neck, there is documentation of subjective (neck, mid back, and low back pain) and objective (decreased range of motion of the cervical spine, tenderness to palpitation throughout the cervical spine with associated spasms, and decreased range of motion of the lumbar spine) findings, current diagnosis (neck sprain), and treatment to date (Terocin Patches). Regarding Trial of Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator (TENS) with supplies, 30 day rental, for the upper back and neck, there is no documentation of a statement identifying that the TENS unit will be used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration. Regarding Follow up visit for the upper back and neck, there is no documentation of the medical necessity for a follow-up visit in order to monitor the patient's progress and make any necessary modifications to the treatment plan.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Trial of Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator (TENS) with supplies, 30 day rental, for the upper back and neck: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Criteria for the use of TENS Page(s): 116.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) Page(s): 113-117.

Decision rationale: MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies documentation of pain of at least three months duration, evidence that other appropriate pain modalities have been tried (including medication) and failed, a statement identifying that the TENS unit will be used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, and a treatment plan including the specific short- and long-term goals of treatment with the TENS, as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of a month trial of a TENS unit. In addition, MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment Guidelines identifies documentation of how often the unit was used, outcomes in terms of pain relief and function, and other ongoing pain treatment during the trial period (including medication use), as criteria necessary to support the medical necessity of continued TENS unit. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of a diagnosis of neck sprain. In addition, there is documentation of pain of at least three months duration, evidence that other appropriate pain modalities have been tried (including medication) and failed. However, there is no documentation of a statement identifying that the TENS unit will be used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Trial of Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator (TENS) with supplies, 30 day rental, for the upper back and neck is not medically necessary.

Follow up visit for the upper back and neck: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 2nd edition: chapter 7; Independent Consultations , page 127

MAXIMUS guideline: The Expert Reviewer did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM), 2nd Edition, (2004) Independent Medical Examinations and Consultations, page(s) 127; Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) Pain Chapter, Office visits

Decision rationale: MTUS reference to ACOEM guidelines state that the occupational health practitioner may refer to other specialist if a diagnosis is uncertain or extremely complex, when psychosocial facts are present, or when the plan or course of care may benefit from additional expertise. ODG identifies that office visits are based upon a review of the patient concerns, signs and symptoms, clinical stability, and reasonable physician judgment. Within the medical information available for review, there is documentation of a diagnosis of neck sprain. However, given a non-certification of an associated request for Trial of Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator (TENS) with supplies, 30 day rental, for the upper back and neck and given no documentation of a rational identifying medical necessity of the requested follow up visit for the upper back and neck, there is no documentation of the medical necessity for a follow-up visit in order to monitor the patient's progress and make any necessary modifications to the treatment plan. Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for Follow up visit for the upper back and neck is not medically necessary.

