

Case Number:	CM14-0091433		
Date Assigned:	07/25/2014	Date of Injury:	09/24/1996
Decision Date:	10/20/2014	UR Denial Date:	05/29/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	06/16/2014

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 56-year-old male with a 9/24/96 date of injury, and right shoulder arthroscopy with subacromial decompression (date unspecified). At the time (5/9/14) of request for authorization for TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) unit for home use for the right shoulder, purchase, there is documentation of subjective constant achy pain in the right shoulder with clicking and popping sounds upon movement and objective tenderness to palpation over the acromioclavicular joint, restricted range of motion with crepitation over the acromioclavicular joint, and rotator cuff weakness. The current diagnoses are right shoulder strain with impingement and status post right shoulder arthroscopy. Treatment to date includes medications and Physical Therapy. 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, and a treatment plan including the specific short- and long-term goals of treatment with the TENS.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) unit for home use for the right shoulder, purchase: Upheld

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

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

Decision rationale: The 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 diagnoses of right shoulder strain with impingement and status post right shoulder arthroscopy. 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, and a treatment plan including the specific short- and long-term goals of treatment with the TENS. In addition, the request TENS for purchase exceeds guidelines (a one month trial). Therefore, based on guidelines and a review of the evidence, the request for TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) unit for home use for the right shoulder, purchase is not medically necessary.