

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0110561		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	06/17/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	02/01/2006
<b>Decision Date:</b>	07/15/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	05/05/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	06/08/2015

### 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, Alabama, 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 58 year old male, who sustained an industrial injury on 2/1/2006. The current diagnoses are lumbosacral joint/ligament sprain/strain, thoracic sprain/strain, and status post-surgery. According to the progress report dated 4/23/2015, the injured worker complains of constant pain across the middle back, lower back, and buttocks, right greater than left. The pain is rated 3.5-10/10 on a subjective pain scale. The physical examination of the spine reveals spasm and tenderness over the parafacet area from T6 to S1. The current medication list is not available for review. Treatment to date has included medication management, MRI studies, TENS unit, home exercise program, and surgical intervention. The plan of care includes electromyography/Nerve Conduction Velocity of bilateral lower extremities.

### IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

**Electromyography/Nerve Conduction Velocity of bilateral lower extremities:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 303. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines, Low Back, Lumbar and Thoracic (Acute and Chronic), Electromyography; Nerve Conduction Study.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints  
Page(s): 309.

**Decision rationale:** According to MTUS guidelines (MTUS page 303 from ACOEM guidelines), "Electromyography (EMG), including H-reflex tests, may be useful to identify subtle, focal neurologic dysfunction in patients with low back symptoms lasting more than three or four weeks." EMG has excellent ability to identify abnormalities related to disc protrusion (MTUS page 304 from ACOEM guidelines). According to MTUS guidelines, needle EMG study helps identify subtle neurological focal dysfunction in patients with neck and arm symptoms. "When the neurologic examination is less clear, however, further physiologic evidence of nerve dysfunction can be obtained before ordering an imaging study Electromyography (EMG), and nerve conduction velocities (NCV), including H-reflex tests, may help identify subtle focal neurologic dysfunction in patients with neck or arm symptoms, or both, lasting more than three or four weeks (page 178)." EMG is indicated to clarify nerve dysfunction in case of suspected disc herniation (page 182). EMG is useful to identify physiological insult and anatomical defect in case of neck pain (page 179). In this case, a lumbar MRI dated April 1, 2015 showed evidence of canal stenosis and nerve root impingement. Therefore, the request for EMG/NCV study of the bilateral lower extremities is not medically necessary.