

Case Number:	CM15-0129044		
Date Assigned:	07/15/2015	Date of Injury:	10/15/2013
Decision Date:	08/11/2015	UR Denial Date:	06/01/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	07/02/2015

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: North Carolina
 Certification(s)/Specialty: Family Practice

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 53 year old male with an industrial injury dated 10/15/2013. The injured worker's diagnoses include intersection syndrome of the right wrist with wrist joint inflammation of the left wrist, olecranon capitellar joint inflammation of the right, mild lateral epicondylitis on the right, right shoulder impingement with bicipital tendinitis, discogenic lumbar condition with radiculopathy, right greater than left, patellofemoral inflammation on the right and anterior talo fibular ligament inflammation on the right with a positive anterior drawer test. Treatment consisted of diagnostic studies, prescribed medications, and periodic follow up visits. In a progress note dated 05/11/2015, the injured worker reported continued pain in the bilateral hands, right knee, right ankle and right elbow. Objective findings revealed tenderness across the cervical and lumbar paraspinals muscles bilaterally, pain along the facets and pain with facet loading. The treating physician prescribed services for four-lead transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) unit, lumbar spine, per 05/11/15 order, Quantity: 1.00 and conductive garment per 05/11/15 order, Quantity: 1.00, now under review.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

Four-lead TENS unit, lumbar spine, per 05/11/15 order, Qty: 1.00: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous electrotherapy Page(s): 114-116.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS Page(s): 114.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation states: TENS, chronic pain (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation). Not recommended as a primary treatment modality, but a one-month home-based TENS trial may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option, if used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, for the conditions described below. While TENS may reflect the long-standing accepted standard of care within many medical communities, the results of studies are inconclusive; the published trials do not provide information on the stimulation parameters which are most likely to provide optimum pain relief, nor do they answer questions about long-term effectiveness. (Carroll-Cochrane, 2001) Several published evidence-based assessments of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) have found that evidence is lacking concerning effectiveness. One problem with current studies is that many only evaluated single-dose treatment, which may not reflect the use of this modality in a clinical setting. Other problems include statistical methodology, small sample size, influence of placebo effect, and difficulty comparing the different outcomes that were measured. This treatment option is recommended as an adjunct to a program of evidence based functional restoration. However, it is recommended for a one-month trial to document subjective and objective gains from the treatment. There is no provided documentation of a one-month trial period with objective measurements of improvement. Therefore criteria have not been met and the request is not medically necessary.

Conductive garment per 05/11/15 order, Qty: 1.00: Upheld

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

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS Page(s): 114.

Decision rationale: The California chronic pain medical treatment guidelines section on transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation states: TENS, chronic pain (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation). Not recommended as a primary treatment modality, but a one-month home-based TENS trial may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option, if used as an adjunct to a program of evidence-based functional restoration, for the conditions described below. While TENS may reflect the long-standing accepted standard of care within many medical communities, the results of studies are inconclusive; the published trials do not provide information on the stimulation parameters which are most likely to provide optimum pain relief, nor do they answer questions about long-term effectiveness. (Carroll-Cochrane, 2001) Several published evidence-based assessments of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) have found that evidence is lacking concerning effectiveness. One problem with current studies is that many only evaluated single-dose treatment, which may not reflect the use of this

modality in a clinical setting. Other problems include statistical methodology, small sample size, influence of placebo effect, and difficulty comparing the different outcomes that were measured. This treatment option is recommended as an adjunct to a program of evidence based functional restoration. However, it is recommended for a one-month trial to document subjective and objective gains from the treatment. There is no provided documentation of a one-month trial period with objective measurements of improvement. Therefore criteria have not been met and the request is not certified as the TENS unit is not necessary, the conductive garment is not medically necessary.