

Case Number:	CM15-0176115		
Date Assigned:	09/17/2015	Date of Injury:	12/17/2009
Decision Date:	10/19/2015	UR Denial Date:	08/12/2015
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	09/08/2015

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: Massachusetts

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, Pain Management

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 61-year-old female, with a reported date of injury of 12-17-2009. The diagnoses include chronic pain syndrome and sacroiliac sprain and strain. Treatments and evaluation to date have included acupuncture (helpful), Gabapentin, Tramadol, Meloxicam, and a trial of Gralise (very helpful). The diagnostic studies to date have not been included in the medical records. The medical report dated 07-14-2015 indicates that the injured worker complained of right buttock and right leg pain. It was noted that she experienced the complaint 100% of the time since the injury. She also experienced radiating pain into the buttocks and down both legs. It was noted that the injured worker had lost time from work because of the pain. The physical examination showed no acute distress. It was noted that the average pain level with medication was rated 6 out of 10 (07/14/2015), and without medication, the pain level was rated 9-10 out of 10 (07-14-2015). The injured worker's pain level remained relatively the same; her pain level on 06-11-2015 was rated 5-6 out of 10 with medications and 8-9 out of 10 without medications. The treatment plan included a TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) unit. The treating physician stated that the injured worker continued to remain "symptomatic of the right groin and lower back. Lower back left side greater than left." The rationale for the TENS unit was not indicated. The injured worker was currently on disability. The treating physician requested a TENS unit for the sacroiliac. On 08-12-2015, Utilization Review (UR) non-certified the request for a TENS unit for the sacroiliac.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

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

TENS unit for sacroiliac: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG), Hip & Pelvis, TENS.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Medical Treatment 2009, Section(s): Transcutaneous electrotherapy.

Decision rationale: The claimant sustained a work injury in December 2009 and continues to be treated for right buttock and right leg pain. Treatments have included acupuncture, medications, modalities, and exercise with benefit. When seen, there was a normal BMI. She was in no acute distress. Authorization for additional acupuncture treatments and a TENS unit are being requested. A one-month home-based trial of TENS may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option. Criteria for the continued use of TENS include documentation of a one-month trial period of the TENS unit including how often the unit was used, as well as outcomes in terms of pain relief. In this case, there is no documented home-based trial of TENS. Providing a TENS unit was not medically necessary.