

<b>Case Number:</b>	CM15-0071776		
<b>Date Assigned:</b>	04/22/2015	<b>Date of Injury:</b>	05/23/2011
<b>Decision Date:</b>	05/20/2015	<b>UR Denial Date:</b>	03/19/2015
<b>Priority:</b>	Standard	<b>Application Received:</b>	04/15/2015

### 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: Arizona, California  
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:

This 69 year old man sustained an industrial injury on 5/23/2011 when the van he was driving was hit by a speeding vehicle. He went to an urgent care center and had x-rays performed. He has since followed up with several orthopedists and spinal surgeons. Diagnoses include thoracic back pain, chronic neck pain, and chronic back pain. Treatment has included oral medications and injections. Physician notes from an initial visit dated 3/4/2015 show complaints of right low back and neck pain rated 4/10. Recommendations include Norco, three topical creams, TENS unit for severe spasms, continue to walk and stretch, and follow up in one month.

### 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 purchase:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous Electrotherapy; TENS, chronic pain (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) Page(s): 114-116.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS Page(s): 113-114.

**Decision rationale:** According to the MTUS guidelines, a TENS unit is not recommended as a primary treatment modality, but a one-month home-based TENS trial may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option. It is recommended for the following diagnoses: CRPS, multiple sclerosis, spasticity due to spinal cord injury and neuropathic pain due to diabetes or herpes. In this case, the claimant did not have the above diagnoses. In addition, the TENS was prescribed for purchase and indefinite use is not recommended. The request for a TENS unit is not medically necessary.

**3 month supply of Electrodes (X 4 Pairs), Skin Preps and Lead Wires:** Upheld

**Claims Administrator guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines Transcutaneous Electrotherapy; TENS, chronic pain (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) Page(s): 114-116.

**MAXIMUS guideline:** Decision based on MTUS Chronic Pain Treatment Guidelines TENS Page(s): 113-114.

**Decision rationale:** According to the MTUS guidelines, a TENS unit is not recommended as a primary treatment modality, but a one-month home-based TENS trial may be considered as a noninvasive conservative option. It is recommended for the following diagnoses: CRPS, multiple sclerosis, spasticity due to spinal cord injury and neuropathic pain due to diabetes or herpes. In this case, the claimant did not have the above diagnoses. In addition, the TENS was prescribed for purchase and indefinite use is not recommended. The request for a TENS unit is not medically necessary. As noted above, since the TENS is not necessary, its supplies are not medically necessary.