Electrotherapy

A Simple Guide to Coding and Billing
**Unit Types:**

**TENS units** -- TENS is effectively used to treat all types of chronic and acute pain. Just about anything for which you would take an aspirin, Tylenol, or any other pain medication can probably be effectively relieved with a TENS unit.

The TENS stimulator is a battery-powered device which transmits an electrical impulse through lead wires and surface electrodes to underlying nerves. The stimulator converts the direct current of the battery into pulses of stimulation. The current travels through electrodes and into the skin stimulating specific nerve pathways to produce a tingling or massaging sensation that reduces the perception of pain.

When used as directed; TENS is a safe, non-invasive, drug-free method of pain management. It is used to offer a better quality of life for people with pain.

**EMS units** -- In addition to the pain relief offered by TENS, Muscle Stim (or EMS) is widely used by healthcare professionals in the treatment of patients to:

- strengthen muscles
- prevent atrophy
- maintain & increase range of motion
- keep muscles viable
- limit edema
- delay muscle fibrosis
- reduce abnormal muscle tone
- reduce muscle spasm
- increase fibral contraction
- accelerate blood circulation
- promote metabolism
- rehabilitate stroke patients

**Microcurrent units** -- Microcurrent therapy is often recommended in cases involving soft tissue inflammation or muscle spasm. Since Microcurrent therapy mimics the body's electrical fields, it is helpful in relieving pain and stimulating the healing of soft tissues.

- Can help speed the healing process
- Reduces swelling and inflammation
- Masks acute and chronic pain
- Releases muscle trigger points
- Improves soft tissue regeneration

**Portable Ultrasound units** -- Delivers sound waves that penetrate the skin's surface causing soft tissues to vibrate creating deep heat. In turn, the heat induces vasodilatation: drawing blood into the target tissues. Increased blood flow delivers needed oxygen and nutrients, and removes cell wastes.

The deep heat helps to relieve pain, inflammation, reduces muscle spasms, and accelerates healing. Depending on the treatment area, range of motion may be increased.
Insurance Coding:

When coding for electrotherapy units, it is suggested that the codes below are used for each of the types of equipment specified.

You will want to use the correct modifier when coding to indicate whether the item is being rented or purchased by the patient. Some insurance companies will only pay for the purchase of the item after a rental of the item has previously been billed. In most cases, rental modifiers are “R” or “RR” and most purchase modifiers are “P” or “40”. Check with the appropriate insurance for exact modifiers.

TENS Unit – E0730

EMS Unit – E0745

MicroCurrent Unit – E1399

Ultrasound Unit – E1399

Electrodes – A4556 or A4595 (these will always be purchase)

Insurance Billing:

It is always recommended that prior to distributing any of the units to the patient, a call is made to the insurance company to verify the eligibility of the patients and that the patient’s policy benefits cover the specific insurance code(s) listed above for the item(s) being prescribed, and if the item may be distributed to the patient as a purchase or if the item needs to be billed as a rental item.

Once verified, the items may be distributed to the patient. You will then submit the initial claim for the rental or purchase of the unit as a paper claim accompanied with the completed and signed Letter of Medical Necessity (Addendum A) that is included with each unit. You will want to keep a copy of this Letter of Medical Necessity for the patient’s chart as well as normal documentation in the patient file stating that the unit has been prescribed to the patient.

TENS units are the most common unit and are most widely covered by most insurance carriers. EMS units are not always covered so it is a good idea to check patient benefits. Microcurrent units and Ultrasound units do not have their own billing codes and instead use a miscellaneous billing code, so it is also best to check coverage for these items prior to distribution. In respect to auto claims and workers’ comp, all of the units are covered in most circumstances.

Below are examples of insurance billing for each of the items. With the exception of the Ultrasound unit, all of the other units will bill for the unit and accompanying electrodes.
**Suggested billing amounts**

TENS Unit (Rental) -- $225  
TENS Unit (Purchase) -- $495  
EMS Unit (Rental) -- $250  
EMS Unit (Purchase) -- $595  
Microcurrent Unit (Rental) -- $250  
Microcurrent Unit (Purchase) -- $595  
Portable Ultrasound Unit (Rental) -- $225  
Portable Ultrasound Unit (Purchase) -- $495  
Electrodes -- $27 (per pack of 4)

**Below is an example of sample billing for a TENS unit:**

If billing **rental** of the unit first, billing will be as follows:

Day 1 – Bill for TENS unit rental - E0730 “R” for $225 (send paper claim in with Letter of Medical Necessity)

Day 7 – Bill for 12 packs of electrodes (a 3-month supply) - A4556 “P” for $324 (send claim either by paper or electronically)

Day 31 – Bill for TENS unit purchase – E0730 “P” for $495 (send claim either by paper or electronically)

Bill for any additional electrodes requested by the patient in the future.

If billing **purchase** of the unit, billing will be as follows:

Day 1 – Bill for TENS unit rental - E0730 “P” for $495 (send paper claim in with Letter of Medical Necessity)

Day 7 – Bill for 12 packs of electrodes (a 3-month supply) - A4556 “P” for $324 (send claim either by paper or electronically)

Bill for any additional electrodes requested by the patient in the future.

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**This same model will be used for billing an EMS or Microcurrent unit, substituting the appropriate HCPCS code and billing amount for the item.**

For the Ultrasound Unit, this model would also be used except that no electrodes would be provided, therefore no electrode claim would be sent.
Patient Name:

Recommended Usage: Daily x per week

Is this an injury related to:

- Workers Compensation: Y N
- Auto Accident: Y N

Area(s) to be treated

Pain Severity

- Chronic
- Severe
- Intractable

- Mild
- Moderate

Symptoms:

. .

Objective findings:

. .

Assessment:

. .

Prognosis (circle one)

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Guarded

Period of Medical Necessity

6 months 9 months 12 months

Date First Diagnosed

Date Last Seen

Areas(s) to be treated:

. .

Previous Treatments:

. .

I certify that the above prescribed equipment is both reasonable and medically necessary as part of the patient's treatment plan unless otherwise noted.

PHYSICIAN'S NAME
& Address

TELEPHONE #

Fax #

UPIN / License #

PHYSICIAN'S SIGNATURE

DATE
An Easy Guide to TENS Pain Relief

A book of indications, electrode placement & suggested protocol settings
Electrode Placement and Charts

The importance of accurate electrode placement

Proper electrode placement is vital to obtain the best results from your TENS unit. Please see the following charts which have been specially prepared to help you.

The most important aspect of TENS electrode placement is to position them so that the current passes through the painful area, or along the nerves leading from the pain.

How to use the electrode placement charts

Check the index on the opposite page for the chart most applicable to the pain problem. We have selected the easiest and most frequently used electrode placement positions and settings. Note: These are suggested settings. There are alternative settings and all settings should be instructed by a medical practitioner.
LOW BACK PAIN

➢ Setting

MODE: C Mode

PULSE WIDTH: 260

PULSE RATE: 50-80Hz

OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity that the muscles feel.

➢ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
HIP NEURALGIA

➢ Setting

MODE: M Mode

PULSE WIDTH: 150-260

PULSE RATE: 80-120Hz

OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➢ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 4 days.

4 hours per day thereafter.
PHANTOM LIMB, LOWER EXTREMITY

➢ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode or M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 160 - 200

**PULSE RATE:** 50 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➢ Treatment Session

24 hours everyday for a week is available.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
SCIATICA

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 260
  - **PULSE RATE:** 150Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
BICIPITAL TENDONITIS

- **Setting**
  
  **MODE:** M Mode
  
  **PULSE WIDTH:** 150 - 160
  
  **PULSE RATE:** 50Hz
  
  **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  
  24 hours is available until initial relief.
  
  30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
TEMPORAL MANDIBULAR JOINT PAIN (TMJ)

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 220
  - **PULSE RATE:** 10Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available for the first 2 days.
  - 6 hours daily thereafter.
SHOULDER PAIN

➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

**PULSE RATE:** 80 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

**Treatment Session**

24 hours is available until initial relief.
20-30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 150
  - **PULSE RATE:** 80 - 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available for the first 4 days.
  - 4-6 hours daily thereafter.
TRIGEMINAL NEURALGIA

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 70
  - **PULSE RATE:** 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 20 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
CERVICAL PAIN

➢ Setting

**MODE**: C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH**: 100 - 150

**PULSE RATE**: 60 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT**: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➢ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
CHRONIC CERVICAL STRAIN

- Setting

  **MODE**: M Mode
  **PULSE WIDTH**: 160
  **PULSE RATE**: 30Hz
  **OUTPUT**: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- Treatment Session

  24 hours is available for the first 4 days.
  4-5 hours daily thereafter.
CHRONIC CERVICAL SPINE PAIN (Postlaminectomy)

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 200
  - **PULSE RATE:** 10Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available for the first 4 days.
  - 4-5 hours daily thereafter.
CERVICAL OSTEOARTHRITIS

- Setting
  - MODE: C Mode
  - PULSE WIDTH: 100 - 150
  - PULSE RATE: 100Hz
  - OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- Treatment Session
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 20-30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
UNILATERAL CERVICAL SPINE PAIN

➤ Setting

MODE: M Mode

PULSE WIDTH: 100

PULSE RATE: 100Hz

OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
MASECTOMY – RIGHT SIDE

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 260
  - **PULSE RATE:** 120Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 15 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
DEGENERATIVE ARTHRITIS: CERVICAL AND LUMBAR

➤ Setting

MODE: C Mode

PULSE WIDTH: 100

PULSE RATE: 100Hz

OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
LATERAL RIB CAGE PAIN

- Setting
  - MODE: C Mode
  - PULSE WIDTH: 150
  - PULSE RATE: 100Hz
  - OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- Treatment Session
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
CHRONIC HIP PAIN

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 200
  - **PULSE RATE:** 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
HERPES ZOSTER NEURALGIA

- Setting
  - MODE: C Mode
  - PULSE WIDTH: 150
  - PULSE RATE: 100Hz
  - OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- Treatment Session
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
ACUTE MUSCLE AND LIGAMENT TEAR - ANKLE

➢ Setting

MODE: C Mode

PULSE WIDTH: 100

PULSE RATE: 100Hz

OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➢ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

Place one set of electrodes on medial side and one set on lateral side.
POST-PODIATRIC SURGERY (involving lateral toes)

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** C Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 150
  - **PULSE RATE:** 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available for the first 4 days.
  - 4 hours daily thereafter.
KNEE PAIN – POST-OP

➤ Setting

 MODE: M Mode

 PULSE WIDTH: 100 - 150

 PULSE RATE: 120Hz

 OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➤ Treatment Session

 24 hours is available until initial relief.

 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
DEGENERATIVE ARTHRITIS - KNEE PAIN

➢ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 220

**PULSE RATE:** 80Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➢ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
RECURRENT PATELLAR SUBLAXATION

- **Setting**
  - MODE: C Mode
  - PULSE WIDTH: 220
  - PULSE RATE: 80Hz
  - OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available for the first 4 days.
  - 4 hours daily thereafter.

Primary Placement

Place one set of electrodes on medial side and one set on lateral side.
LOW EXTREMITY PAIN
(REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY)

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** C Mode or M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 160
  - **PULSE RATE:** 30 - 80Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
LOWER LEG PAIN
(NEUROPATHY)

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** M Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 160
  - **PULSE RATE:** 60 - 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** C Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 260
  - **PULSE RATE:** 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 20 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
WRIST PAIN

➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

**PULSE RATE:** 30 - 50Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
ELBOW & FOREARM PAIN

- **Setting**
  - **MODE**: C Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH**: 100
  - **PULSE RATE**: 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT**: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

**Primary Placement**

![Illustration of primary placement areas on the elbow and forearm.](image)
UPPER EXTREMITY PAIN
(REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY)

- **Setting**
  
  **MODE:** C Mode or M Mode
  
  **PULSE WIDTH:** 220
  
  **PULSE RATE:** 30 - 50Hz
  
  **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.
  
  **SUGGESTION:** Initial treatment begins with a low pulse width. Look for reduction in swelling and temperature.

- **Treatment Session**
  
  24 hours is available until initial relief.
  
  30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
ULNAR NERVE LESION

- **Setting**
  - **MODE:** C Mode
  - **PULSE WIDTH:** 100
  - **PULSE RATE:** 100Hz
  - **OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- **Treatment Session**
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.
ATYPICAL FACIAL PAIN

- Setting
  - MODE: M Mode
  - PULSE WIDTH: 260
  - PULSE RATE: 100Hz
  - OUTPUT: Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

- Treatment Session
  - 24 hours is available until initial relief.
  - 30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.