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**Provider Notification Update**

<b>Date of Notification</b>	<b>7/6/09</b>
<b>Plans Affected</b>	<b>Mercy Care Plan, Mercy Care Advantage, and Mercy HealthCare Group</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Podiatry – TENS Unit</b>

Mercy Care would like to provide coverage clarification regarding TENS Units prescribed by Podiatrists. According to Mercy Care’s Clinical Policy Bulletin Number 0011 regarding Electrical Stimulation for Pain, it states:

*“Mercy Care considers transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulators (TENS) medically necessary durable medical equipment (DME) when used as an adjunct or as an alternative to the use of drugs either in the treatment of acute post-operative pain in the first 30 days after surgery, or for certain types of chronic, intractable pain not adequately responsive to other methods of treatment including, as appropriate, physical therapy and pharmacotherapy. However, TENS is considered experimental and investigational for acute pain (less than three months duration) other than post-operative pain. TENS is also considered experimental and investigational for acute and chronic headaches, deep abdominal pain, pelvic pain, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) pain and all other indications because there is inadequate scientific evidence to support its efficacy for these specific types of pain.”*

Based on the fact that TENS is considered experimental and investigational for acute pain other than post-operative pain and all other indications because there is inadequate scientific evidence to support its efficacy for these specific types of pain, TENS units will not generally be covered for podiatry services and will be denied by Mercy Care. Only with required adequate medical documentation and approval from Mercy Care’s Medical Director could these services be considered for coverage.