



Medical Advisory Committee POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Date: October 3, 2003

To: John Shilts, Administrator, Workers Compensation Division

From: The Medical Advisory Committee

Re: DRX 9000/Traction

Pursuant to ORS 656.245 (3), the Medical Advisory Committee was asked to consider if treatment via DRX 9000 constituted experimental, unproven, ineffective or outmoded treatment, and if not, the Medical Advisory Committee was asked to provide guidance on whether and when treatment using this device would be appropriate. After review by committee members Tom Williams, P.T., Frank Prideaux, D.C, and Franklin Wong, M.D., we determined that basically the DRX 9000 is an effective traction device and is not experimental, unproven, ineffective or outmoded and does not qualify for exclusion from compensability.

For the purposes of determining whether traction treatment is appropriate or excessive, whether through the DRX 9000 or other means, the Medical Advisory Committee offers the following general guidelines:

1. Traction is typically prescribed initially 2 to 4 times a week for no more than 2 to 4 weeks.
2. If traction is an effective treatment, there will typically be evidence of its effectiveness within the first couple of weeks.
3. The patient should be re-evaluated after the initial 2 to 4 week period of time. If traction has not resulted in some improvement, further traction treatments are not likely to be effective. If traction has resulted in limited improvement, further treatment may be beneficial.
4. Treatment beyond the initial 2 to 4 week period could be accomplished via a home traction unit. If it is provided in-office, it should typically be combined with an exercise program and typically be limited to maximum of 24 visits. Typically if a patient uses 24 in total, the last eight to ten visits should consist mostly of exercises.

5. Prescribing a longer term of traction without evaluation after the initial 4 to 8 visits may lead to ineffective or excessive treatment of the patient. The need for treatment after 8 visits should be documented via evaluation of the patient.