



Peripheral Nerve Stimulator (PNS)

What is Peripheral Nerve Stimulator?

Peripheral nerve stimulation (PNS) is used to treat chronic and acute pain. This treatment can help patients who experience chest wall pain, nerve injury, peripheral neuralgia and post-surgical pain. Peripheral nerve or field stimulation uses an innovative technology that works by introducing an electrical current to the source of chronic pain. Your pain physician will place a stimulator lead along the painful nerves. The lead is connected to a wearable matchbox-sized stimulator that weighs about one ounce. Your pain management doctor can evaluate your symptoms and decide if this procedure may be right for you.

How is the procedure performed?

The procedure is performed in an outpatient surgery center using ultrasound imaging to target a peripheral nerve that takes about one to two hours. Your physician will decide which nerve needs stimulation based on the location of your pain and physical examination findings. You will be lying on the procedure bed with blankets covering you while the area for the block is cleaned with an antiseptic. You will be under anesthesia with moderate to deep sedation. Your doctor will insert the wire under the skin near the target nerve through a small surgical incision. In addition, local anesthetic or numbing medication will be used to numb the skin.

How effective is Peripheral Nerve Stimulator?

Peripheral Nerve Stimulator produces a low voltage current which creates a sensation that blocks the brain's ability to sense the previously perceived pain. It interferes with the perception of pain by creating a pleasant sensation that replaces the pain. Peripheral nerve stimulation can be very effective in reducing chronic pain from certain painful conditions; however, it does not work for everyone. For those that it does help it is an innovative treatment that brings significant relief. Recently peripheral nerve stimulation has become increasingly common in difficult-to-treat neuropathic facial pain.

What risks are involved with Peripheral Nerve Stimulator?

The side effects or complications of Peripheral Nerve Stimulator are rare. However, there are always potential risk when placing a needle in the body. These include bleeding, infection and worsened pain or allergic reaction to the medications used. Some mild short-term side effects include headache, nausea or dizziness. Specific risks of nerve stimulator implantation also include damage

to the nerves or other surrounding structures, movement of or damage to the generator or lead, pain after surgery, problems with how the stimulator works, such as sending too strong of a signal, stopping and starting, or sending a weak signal and the stimulator may not work. The nerve stimulator device may interfere with other devices, such as pacemakers and defibrillators. After the implantation, you may not be able to get an MRI safely. Discuss this with your physician.

What happens after the Peripheral Nerve Stimulator Procedure?

Immediately after the procedure, you will remain under observation while we monitor your vital signs. You might experience pain at the site of surgery that might take a few days to resolve and can be controlled with pain medications. The surgical site will heal for about two weeks before your follow-up appointment. Do not drive or perform any vigorous activity for 12-24 hours after the procedure. You can return to normal activities the following day. You will be able to resume your normal diet and medications. Your physician will schedule your follow up appointment.

Is Peripheral Nerve Stimulator right for me?

If you have chronic pain after surgery or nerve related pain Peripheral Nerve Stimulator may benefit you. Talk to your physician about your symptoms and he/she will help decide what is right for you.