

# Interstim Sacral Nerve Stimulation

More Information on the website : [www.medtronic.com/neuro/interstim](http://www.medtronic.com/neuro/interstim)

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## What is Interstim sacral nerve stimulation?

Sacral nerve stimulation is the introduction of gentle, soothing stimulation or pulsing just below the surface of the skin over the sacrum (tailbone) where the sacral nerves reside. Gentle stimulation is provided by an implanted unit, the size of a silver dollar; that is placed underneath the skin so it doesn't limit the activities of the patient. The stimulation serves to connect the communication signals to the sacral nerves and thereby improve urinary frequency, urge incontinence, urinary retention, interstitial cystitis, irritable bowel syndrome and several other ailments.

## Is it safe?

The gentle stimulation required to correct faulty sacral nerve communications is introduced in the tissues just under the skin over the sacrum (tailbone) through a small lead wire. The lead wire is not actually touching the nerves and is not anywhere near the spine. The technology is similar to that of cardiac pacing and has been proven safe during the last 15 years of use on an international scale. Not a single patient has ever suffered a non-reversible health consequence as a result of sacral nerve stimulation and the treatment is reversible should the patient decide not to continue with the therapy for any reason.

## What can I expect?

Prior to placement of a permanent implant, we will conduct a trial stimulation for one week to assess the effectiveness of the therapy. This is an outpatient procedure performed in the operating room that involves placement of two tiny leads just under the skin. A temporary stimulator unit is worn on the waist, inside or outside of your clothing, during the trial period. With this temporary unit, you will be able to turn it on/off and control the intensity of the stimulation. You will be asked to keep a diary during the trial period.

If the trial is successful and you decide to move forward

with the implanted stimulator then a second outpatient procedure will be performed. The implanted stimulator will be placed in the same incision created for the trial. It will not be necessary to disturb the incision that was made over the sacrum. If the trial fails or you decide not to proceed with the permanent implant then the leads will be removed.

## PHASE I

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### Pre-Test Instructions:

- No aspirin or other blood thinning medication should be taken for 7 days
- Nothing to eat after midnight the night prior to the procedure

### Post-Test Instructions:

- Take antibiotics as prescribed
- Take Tylenol or prescribed medication for pain if needed
- Leave dressing in place
- Take sponge baths
- Contact our office to give your provider information regarding your improvement. Your provider may determine an office visit is necessary to insure maximum therapy benefit.

*Phase 2 continued on back*

### Questions?

Contact the Center for Pelvic Health  
4601 Carothers Parkway Ste 350  
Franklin, TN 37067

[www.centerforpelvichealth.com](http://www.centerforpelvichealth.com)

Phone : 615-284-4664 Fax: 615-284-4668



**Center for  
Pelvic Health**

*An Affiliate of Saint Thomas Health Services*

## PHASE 2

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### Pre-Procedure Instructions:

- No eating after midnight the night before the procedure
- No aspirin or blood thinning medications for one week prior to the procedure
- Bring your “During Test” voiding diary with you

### Post-Procedure Instructions:

- Dressing may be removed the next day
- Tape strips will remain until they fall off on their own
- You may shower after 24 hours (no soaking)
- You may activate the stimulator with your programmer whenever you desire
- Call our office for a follow up appointment to check the incision and adjust the stimulator programming if necessary.
- Call our office if you develop any fever or redness at the incisions.

### Precautions:

- Diathermy (for muscle relaxation) cannot be used if nerve stimulator is present.
- Some theft detectors (Wal-Mart ,Target) and screening devices (airports) may rarely cause the stimulator to turn off or on, or cause a harmless pulse as you approach the device.
- You will have an ID card to present at the airport or other security areas in the event the device activates the security unit.
- Be certain to let your health care providers know you have a pacemaker device and always shut the device off prior to undergoing any surgical procedure.
- MRI scans cannot be performed.

