



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Neuromodulation Procedure: after your operation

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Leaflet 3 of 3

① For more information, please contact:

The Pain Management Clinic

Telephone: 01904 725395

Email: yhs-tr.Info.PainClinic@nhs.net

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This leaflet provides basic information to support you after your operation when you go home.

What happens after your operation?

Following the procedure, you will return to the ward. You will usually be able to go home the same day but there is a very small chance you will need to stay in hospital overnight. Whilst on the ward, a representative from your stimulator company which provided your stimulator will visit to switch on your device, explain how to use your equipment and provide you with relevant contact information.

Looking after your wound

The wound is closed with staples or stitches, and you will be told which was used for you. We recommend that your staples or stitches are removed between at least ten but no more than 14 days after your operation. These are removed by your practice nurse. Contact your GP practice to arrange for the practice nurse to remove your stitches or staples.

If you have had staples, we will provide you with a clip remover to take to this appointment, if needed.

There is a small chance of you developing an infection in either of your wounds following surgery.

To prevent an infection, it is important to:

- Keep your dressing clean, dry and in place for **at least** 48 hours.
- Avoid showering or bathing until you have had your staples or stitches removed.
- If the dressing becomes wet* from blood or any other liquid, you must change the dressing. We will provide you with a small supply of dressings to use at home.

*If there is very mild ooze or staining on the dressing from the wound, do not change or remove it in the first 48 hours. Only change if the dressing is wet.

Advice on changing your dressing-

- Wash your hands with soap and water.
- Carefully take the used dressing off without touching the used side, place in a bag and dispose in the bin.
- Do not touch the healing wound with your fingers.
- Take care not to touch the inside of your new dressing.
- Do not apply antiseptic cream under the dressing.

If the wound is healing and sealed with no leakage, it can be left without a dressing.

However, you may prefer to have a dressing to cover your wound for protection, especially if your clothing is rubbing against it.

Possible complications after your operation

Possible complications of the operation are listed in the neuromodulation procedure leaflet (a copy is available at www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk). Your consultant will discuss these with you when signing your consent form.

Mild discharge or bleeding and bruising in the first 48 hours are normal but if this is excessive or continues after this time contact your GP.

Contact your GP if you experience any of the following:

- Warmth and redness to your wound site
- Increased pain or tenderness to your wound site
- Swelling to your wound site
- Discharge from your wound site (either green or yellow fluid)

Go to A&E if you experience any of the following:

- Severe headache that is worse on standing and sitting up.
- Redness, pus or tenderness around your wound sites as well as feeling generally unwell or having a high temperature.
- High temperature
- Neck stiffness.
- New numbness or weakness in your legs or an inability to walk.
- Difficulty passing urine or repeatedly soiling yourself.

If you attend your GP Surgery or A&E and would like further support, please also call the Spinal Cord Stimulator (SCS) patient line on 01904 725 509 or email yhs-tr.Info.PainClinic@nhs.net so that we can notify your consultant and support you in your needs.

Being active after your operation

It is important to remain active in the weeks following your surgery. However, to prevent movement or displacement of your SCS lead and device, it is important to avoid the following in the first 6-12 weeks after your operation:

- Excessive bending
- Excessive twisting
- Heavy lifting

When will I get relief from my pain?

Not all patients will experience instance pain relief following their neuromodulator 'switch on.' Your review appointments will assess the level of pain relief you are receiving, and adjustments may be made to optimise the effectiveness of your device.

Immediately after the surgery, you are likely to experience acute pain around your wound sites. This is normal. We would expect this to settle after a few days. In the meantime, simple pain relief such as paracetamol can be taken. You should continue to use the pain management techniques and strategies learnt in the pain management programme group.

Unless your consultant has recommended reducing your chronic pain medications straight after surgery, we advise you continue to take your normal pain medications until your review.

At your six weeks review, a plan for reduction of your pain medications will be discussed.

Follow up after surgery

Approximately six weeks after your insertion date, a date for a face-to-face review appointment will be sent to you by post.

At this appointment, your stimulation will be assessed, and settings may be changed to improve the effectiveness of your device. Goals will be discussed, along with a plan for a reduction in your medication if required.

You will then receive six month and yearly telephone reviews.

The reviews may be more frequent if your device settings require adjustment or further checking.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I lose my charger or handheld device?

If you lose your device/equipment, York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust may not be able to replace them unless you pay for a replacement.

These can be expensive so; we advise that you insure your devices on your home insurance. Please contact your device manufacturer for further information regarding device prices.

What if my equipment is not working?

If you have been provided with a patient phone line from your device manufacturer, please contact them in the first instance for any advice about your equipment.

Alternatively, please contact the SCS patient phone line on 01904 725 509 or email yhs-tr.Info.PainClinic@nhs.net

When can I drive after surgery?

- Do not drive for at least four weeks following insertion of a spinal cord stimulator.
- After four weeks, you may drive if you feel able to perform an emergency stop, undertake emergency manoeuvres and safely operate all necessary controls of your car.
- Please seek advice from your car insurer prior to driving.

If your device provides paraesthesia ('tingling') sensation, and you can feel the sensation do not drive whilst it is switched on. Please contact the SCS line or your representative for further advice if required.

Can I have an MRI scan?

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a type of scan that uses strong magnetic fields and radio waves to produce detailed images of inside the body.

Due to the metal components of some stimulators, there may be restrictions to having MRI scans. Some devices may not be compatible with MRI scanners at all, and others may need to be changed into MRI safe mode prior to the scan. If you are told that you need an MRI scan, please make sure the referring person and MRI department are aware in advance that you have a SCS. The referrer may wish to have clarification from your pain consultant, which can be obtained via the Chronic Pain secretaries.

Do I need to take any extra precautions at the airport?

Your manufacturer representative will give you an identification card to show to airport staff.

When can I return to work after surgery?

Return to work after surgery is a very individual decision. It will depend on multiple factors including your pain, your recovery, and the type of work you do.

Your GP and employer may be able to help with this decision and your employer may need to make temporary changes in the workplace to help and support you during your recovery from surgery.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

The Pain Management Clinic, 1st Floor Outpatients,
York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE

Telephone: 01904 725395 or 725397

Email: yhs-tr.Info.PainClinic@nhs.net

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

Please telephone or email if you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio.

如果你要求本資 不同的 或 式提供 , 電
或發電

Jeżeli niniejsze informacje potrzebne są w innym języku lub formacie, należy zadzwonić lub wysłać wiadomość e-mail

Bu bilgileri değişik bir lisanda ya da formatta istiyorsanız lütfen telefon ediniz ya da e-posta gönderiniz

Telephone: 01904 725566

Email: yhs-tr.FacilitiesmanagementHelpdesk@nhs.net

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