

What is Percutaneous Tibial Nerve Stimulation (PTNS)?

Bladder and bowel function is controlled by a group of nerves called the “sacral nerve plexus.” Gentle electrical impulses to stimulate these nerves can reset your bladder and bowel activity to normal function and minimize/treat urinary or stool overactivity and leakage (incontinence).

Why is PTNS Performed?

- Urinary frequency and urgency refractory to medication.
- Leakage of urine.
- Leakage of stool.
- Difficulty emptying the bladder or urinating many times at night

How is PTNS Performed?

You will be placed in a semi-sitting position. A thin, slender acupuncture-like needle will be inserted above the inner side of your ankle. Treatment can be on either leg, however one leg may work better than the other for some patients. An adhesive pad will be applied to your foot to complete the circuit.

You will be asked questions about your sensation and your toe movements will be observed.

The treatment session lasts approximately 30 minutes. You will need 12 weekly sessions over 3 months. It may take anywhere between 8-12 weeks for you to notice any changes. It is very important to not miss any sessions because the entire treatment cycle will need to start again if more than 1 session is missed. Most patients need additional intermittent treatments following the initial 3 months.



What Can I Expect after PTNS?

After the procedure, you may have some minor irritation or redness at the site of needle insertion. You may experience a slight tummy ache or toe numbness, but these symptoms typically resolve over the next few hours. Rarely, you may develop a small collection of blood under the skin or sustain nerve injury.

If you continue to have symptoms or have further questions after 24-48 hours of the procedure, please call your physician at 703-680-2111.