

# Having a temporary sns device fitted for faecal incontinence

## Pelvic Floor Service

Information for Patients

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### Introduction

You will be given this leaflet because you are **having trouble controlling your bowels** (faecal incontinence). A temporary sacral nerve stimulator (SNS) is fitted to help manage this. You will be booked for surgery to fit this.

### What does a temporary (trial) sns involve?

Sacral nerve stimulation is a 2 stage treatment. This is the first or trial stage. Your doctor should let you know about this. A temporary thin wire will be fitted in between the bone at the base of your spine (sacrum). It will be connected to a sns device (white box in belt) and placed outside your body. This will be removed after 2 weeks by your specialist nurse practitioner. This trial is done to see whether the sns will help you.

### Before your surgery

- You will be booked an appointment a few weeks before surgery. This is where a nurse will do your medical checks, check all of your information and medication.
- You will be given a diary to fill in before and after your surgery. This will help the medical team to work out the benefits of this surgery and what to do next. The results will be looked at to see if this has been successful to move to a permanent fitting.

### During your surgery

- A thin wire will be put in between the bone at the base of your spine (sacrum). It will be linked to a temporary device outside your body.

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

- If the first stage is successful a permanent sns will be fitted.
- This is usually a day case procedure and you should be discharged the same day.
- For most people this will be done whilst you are asleep under a general anesthetic. You will be told about this on the morning of the surgery.
- Surgery can take around 2 hours and you will go to a recovery ward after the procedure.
- Once alert and well, you will go to the day case ward. This is where the healthcare staff will make sure you eat and drink before they give you your discharge information.

## After surgery

Your sns nurse will

- see you to set up your device.
- place the sns device in a wearable belt to keep it in place. This must stay in place at all times so the wire moves as little as possible
- switch on the device and will set a program to a Samsung phone.
- ask you to confirm when you feel a stimulation setting and where. This should be comfortable for you and not painful.
- show you how to turn the device on, off, up and down.



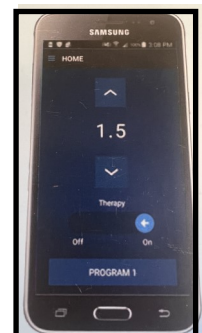
White box stimulator or sns device

**It is also possible to change a setting, but you should do it only on the nurse's advice.**

## Managing the white box stimulator (sns)

The sns nurse will

- give you a Samsung phone. This is to manage the sns device.
- show you how to use it and will give you the information booklet.
- you need to bring it at your next clinic appointment.
- the phone and the device needs to be left on at all times other than when driving.



Samsung phone

## What to avoid after surgery?

**Exercise** - It is important that

- the wire does not move during this trial. This could give us a false reading and affect the results.
- you do not bend, twist and do not do heavy exercises whilst you have the sns device.

**Work**— depending on your job you may need time off work.

**Sex**— please do not have sex whilst you are in the trial phase. This could force the wire out of position.

## Aftercare

As this is a temporary wire there will be dressings over the top of this holding it in place.

- You will be given extra dressings.
- Do not try to take any dressings off.
- Please apply more dressings over the top if these look like they are loose.

We do not usually see an infection with this procedure, but please contact us if you have any concerns.

## What are the possible risks?

Please look out for when there is a bit much redness to the area or signs of heat or discharge.

## Managing washing

You will not be able to bath or shower for the 2 week trial. We advise that water does not come into contact with the dressings and the device.

## How to manage pain

The area may be uncomfortable for a little while after the surgery. You will be given pain relief to take home. You may need to take pain relief **for a few days** until the pain becomes better. The details of how to take this will be on your discharge letter.

## Is driving allowed?

To drive you will need to turn the device off. This is due to the device being on the outside of the body. If you have a permanent implant under the skin you will not need to turn this off.

## What to do when the device is not working (trouble shooting)?

If you notice that the device is not on,

- press the middle button on the white box.
- if a green light does not appear, change the batteries on the device. These are a unique size and spares will be placed in the box you go home with.
- Once the green light is on, to make sure this is working, connect it to your phone.
- You can turn the device up or down to a comfortable level. Please contact our service if you are not sure.

## Follow-up appointment

At your next appointment , after 2 weeks you will have the sns device and wire removed. This should not be painful. Please bring your bowel diaries to compare the results. If successful, your nurse will talk to you about the permanent device.

## Contact details

- For any further questions, please call Leicester Pelvic Floor Service (LPFS) on 0116 2583775
- If the phone is not answered in time, please leave a message.
- Messages are taken off the answer machine from Monday to Friday between 08h00 am and 04h00 pm.

## Space for questions:

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل  
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