

## Sacral Neuromodulation Therapy

Sacral Nerve Neuromodulation Therapy (also known as Sacral Nerve Stimulation or SNS) refers to a small implantable device, similar to a pacemaker, that can help patients with bowel or bladder control problems.

SNM Therapy was developed early in the 1980s and there are more than 300,000 patients worldwide implanted with this device.

The procedure is undertaken in two stages. The first stage is a 2-week trial which allows patients to see if the device improves their symptoms. This allows patients to be fully informed by their own experience before deciding with their treating surgeon to proceed with the second stage in which the permanent battery is placed.

### Stage 1

A very thin electrode (wire) is placed by your surgeon through the S3 foramen (the 3rd sacral nerve) using x-ray guidance in an operating theatre. This is done under local anaesthetic and sedation to ensure correct placement and response with the electrode. The electrode is then connected to a temporary lead which exits through the skin. This connects to a small device that is worn on a belt under your clothes for the duration of the trial.

There are 3 tiny incisions over your lower back and buttocks area which are covered in dressings to keep the area dry during your trial. The procedure is performed as a day-case and it is usually relatively painless. You are not able to shower during this period. Throughout your trial you will be supported by Naomi Hecht from Medtronic who will provide education, initial set up and phone support to you. You will be required to keep a bowel diary throughout the trial period.

The evaluation (or trial) is reversible, stimulation can be turned off at any time, and the system can be permanently removed.

You will have another consultation with your surgeon during the second week of your trial to decide if you would like to proceed with Stage 2.

### Stage 2

The second stage involves insertion of the permanent battery which is connected to the previously implanted electrode. Since the system is placed completely under your skin, others will not see it. This is also undertaken as a day procedure.

The majority of patients whom had a positive response in the trial period will go on to have sustained improvements in their bowel and bladder control. Most patients who undergo SNM feel that it has revolutionised their life and given them back their freedom from incontinence.

For more information on SNM Therapy please follow the links on [www.medtronic.com](http://www.medtronic.com) or book an appointment to see your colorectal surgeon at SCB.

