



SPINAL CORD STIMULATION

What is spinal cord stimulation and who does it help?

Spinal cord stimulation involves implanting a device near the spinal canal that delivers electrical impulses that block pain from being perceived in the brain. Instead of pain, the patient feels a more pleasant tingling sensation. Physicians generally consider this procedure for patients who have severe arm or leg pain or even back pain in some instances. These patients have typically tried and failed other conservative treatments such as physical therapy, injections and medications and may have even had prior surgery. Before a spinal cord stimulator is placed however the patient must have a successful spinal cord stimulator trial.

What is a spinal cord stimulator trial?

After you and your physician discuss the procedure and determine that you would like to proceed, a trial will be arranged to learn if the spinal cord stimulator will be effective in treating your pain. The trial involves a procedure to implant a temporary stimulator to determine if the area of your pain will be covered by stimulation. During the trial which typically lasts 2-5 days, you will want to be certain that you have satisfactory pain control and that you are comfortable with the sensations of stimulation. If the trial is successful, the temporary stimulator will be taken out and a permanent stimulator implantation will be scheduled.

What happens during the procedure?

An I.V. may be started so relaxation medicine can be given. You will lie face down on a procedure table in a sterile environment. The physician will use fluoroscopic (x-ray) guidance to visualize your spine. The physician will scrub your skin with sterile soap and place a drape on your back. The physician will numb a small area of skin with anesthetic medication. The physician will direct a needle using fluoroscopic guidance into a space around the spinal canal. Two “leads” will then be directed through this needle. Once the leads are in place, your physician will activate the system. You will help the physician determine how well the stimulation pattern covers your pain pattern and the leads will be redirected accordingly.

What happens after the procedure?

Immediately after the procedure, you will go to a recovery area where you will be monitored by the nursing staff. You will also meet with the representative for the spinal cord stimulator who will help adjust the level of stimulation in order to help cover your pain adequately. During the following days of the trial, you should avoid extreme lifting, bending, stretching, twisting and strenuous activity. You will meet with your representative and your doctor during the trial period in order to determine if spinal cord stimulation is right for you.

General Pre-op and Post-op Instructions:

- You will be scheduled at one of the facilities listed below. You will be at the facility approximately 1-1.5 hours total.
- You will be required to have a responsible adult drive you home.
- You should take your routine medications (ie. blood pressure, diabetic medications) the day of your procedure.
- You must not eat any food six hours prior to your appointment.
- You may have sips of clear liquids up to two hours prior to your appointment
- You may want to wear loose, comfortable clothing to your appointment.

- You may return to your normal activities the day after your procedure, including returning to work.
- Please have your labs drawn 5-7 days before your procedure. Our office will provide you with a lab slip.
- If you are taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents (Advil, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Motrin, etc.), please discontinue for 4 days before the procedure.
- If you are taking any dose of Coumadin, Aspirin, or any other blood thinners, please notify the office immediately and see below for instructions.
- Do not discontinue any prescribed medication unless you have received authorization from the prescribing physician.

Blood Thinner: Time to stop prior to each procedure:

Coumadin 5 days (INR will be checked at our office, should be 1.3 or lower)

Aspirin 81mg or 325mg 7 days

Pradaxa 5 days

Plavix 7 days

Persantine 7 days

Aggrenox 7 days

Ticlid 14 days

Xarelto 48 hours

Subcutaneous Heparin 12 hours

IV Heparin 4 hours

Pletal/Cilostazol 7 days

Eliquis 48 hours

Brilinta 5 days

Effient 7 days

Location of Procedures:

- Desert Spine and Sports Phoenix office: 3700 N 24th Street, Ste 210. Phoenix, AZ 85016
- Desert Spine and Sports Mesa Office: 6634 E. Baseline Rd., Suite 101 Mesa, AZ 85206
- Desert Spine and Sports Scottsdale office: 8670 E Shea Blvd Suite 102, Scottsdale AZ 85260

If you need to reschedule this appointment, please give 24 hours notice and call **602-840-0681**.