

Neurostimulation of lumbar muscles for refractory non-specific chronic low back pain

Information for the public

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There is not enough evidence about how well this procedure works or how safe it is. This type of procedure can cause complications. So it can only be done with special arrangements. This means you will have regular appointments afterwards to check how well it is working or if it has caused problems.

Low back pain of unknown cause (non-specific) can be long term (chronic) and difficult to treat (refractory). In this procedure, a cut is made on the lower back or upper buttock and a small battery-powered device (neurostimulator) is placed under the skin. Two wires are placed near the nerves that control the muscles either side of the spine (lumbar multifidus muscles) and connected to the neurostimulator. After the procedure, the patient uses a remote control to stimulate the nerves using low-voltage electricity. This is usually done twice a day for about 30 minutes. The aim is to stimulate the lumbar muscles and reduce pain.

The [NHS website](#) may have information on your condition and treatment options.

You can [search the NHS website for information about consultants and hospitals](#) that offer this procedure.

Is this procedure right for me?

You should be included in [making decisions about your care](#).

Your healthcare professionals should explain the risks and benefits of this procedure and how it is done. They should discuss your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should offer you more information about the procedure. Your family or carers can be involved if you want or need them to be.

You will be asked to decide whether you agree (consent) to have the procedure. Find out more about [giving consent to treatment on the NHS website](#).

Some questions to think about

- How many appointments will I need?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- Will I have to stay in hospital?
- What happens if it does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure?
- Are other treatments available?

Information and support

- [NICE's information on interventional procedures guidance](#) explains what an interventional procedure is and how we assess it.
- [NICE's information on interventional procedures recommendations](#) explains what special arrangements are.

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