



Women's Wellness Center  
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## **Percutaneous Tibial Nerve Stimulation (PTNS): a Non-Drug, Non-Surgical Treatment for Overactive Bladder**

**What is Percutaneous Tibial Nerve Stimulation (PTNS)?** PTNS is a technique used to treat overactive bladder, symptoms of urinary urgency or frequency and urge incontinence by a system called neuromodulation.

**How does neuromodulation work?** Bladder function is regulated by a group of nerves at the base of the spine called the sacral nerve plexus. By stimulating these nerves through gentle electrical impulses (neuromodulation), your bladder activity can be changed, and incontinence or urgency can be improved.

**What can I expect during PTNS treatment?** An electrical impulse is introduced through a very thin needle inserted into the soft tissue near your ankle, and travels along the tibial nerve to the nerves in the spine that control pelvic floor function (sacral nerve plexus). After turning on the stimulator, your therapist will observe your body's response to determine the ideal strength of the impulses.

You will be seated in a comfortable recliner, relaxing during the treatment. Bring a book if you like. Each of your treatments will last approximately 30 minutes. You will receive an initial series of 12 treatments, (usually once a week for 12 weeks or 2 sessions per week for 6 weeks). After the initial 12 treatments, it will be determined if occasional follow up treatments are needed to maintain your results.

**What will I feel with PTNS?** PTNS treatment is typically well tolerated. Because individuals may experience the sensation of PTNS in different ways, it's difficult to say exactly what the treatment would feel like to you. It is usually described as non-painful tingling or buzzing. The PTNS unit offers many different levels of stimulation, and your therapist will be able to adjust treatment to suit you.

**How soon will I see results?** Because PTNS gently modifies nerve signals to achieve bladder control, it may take 4-6 treatments for you to see your symptoms change. A majority of individuals using this type of treatment experience significant improvement in their bladder control symptoms.

**What are the risks/side effects associated with PTNS?** A few patients may experience transient discomfort or pain, skin inflammation at or near the stimulation site, or transient toe numbness.

**Are there people who should not have PTNS treatment?**

- Patients with pacemakers or implantable defibrillators
- Patients prone to excessive bleeding due to a bleeding disorder
- Patients who are pregnant or planning to become pregnant during the duration of the treatment