

# Implantable Tibial Nerve Stimulation (ITNS)

Patient Information · A small implanted device near the ankle for overactive bladder

WARWIKI

ITNS is a small device placed near the ankle that gently stimulates the **tibial nerve** to calm an **overactive bladder** — urgency, frequent trips, and urge leakage. It works like PTNS (the in-office ankle treatment) but, because the device is **implanted**, you get the therapy **at home** instead of coming back for weekly visits.

## How It Works

The tibial nerve, near the inner ankle, connects up to the same spinal nerves that control the bladder. Gently stimulating it sends signals that **retrain and calm** the bladder's overactivity — reducing urgency and leaks. The implant delivers those pulses for you, so you no longer need repeat office sessions. There are no medicines and no whole-body side effects.

## Is It Right for Me?

- A good option for **overactive bladder** (urgency, frequency, urge leakage), especially when medicines didn't work or caused side effects
- Drug-free — useful if you can't take bladder medicines
- Often chosen by people who found **in-office PTNS helpful** but hard to keep up with weekly
- Unlike a sacral "bladder pacemaker," most ITNS devices need **no trial period** first

## LEARN THE TERMS

### Overactive bladder

Urgency and frequent urination from the bladder squeezing too soon.

### Tibial nerve

A nerve near the ankle that links to the bladder's nerve supply.

### Neuromodulation

Using gentle electrical pulses to calm overactive nerves.

### Implant

A small device placed under the skin during a short procedure.

### Wearable

A removable ankle band that powers and controls some devices.

### Local anesthesia

Numbing medicine so the area is pain-free while you stay awake.

**WILL IT HURT?** The device is placed during a **short outpatient procedure** using numbing medicine (local anesthesia) — you're awake but shouldn't feel pain, just some pressure. The therapy itself feels like a mild **tingling** or a gentle toe curl, not pain. Most people go home the same day.

## How It's Done

- 1 Through a **small cut near the ankle**, the device is placed close to the tibial nerve — usually under local anesthesia, in about **20–35 minutes**.
- 2 The site is closed and allowed to heal; therapy usually starts a **few weeks later**.
- 3 Your team programs the settings and shows you how the device works.

## The Two Device Types

- One type is **fully implanted and runs on its own battery** — nothing to wear or charge; it stimulates automatically on a set schedule.
- The other has **no battery inside**; you wear a small **ankle band** that powers it and lets you run your own sessions at home.
- Your surgeon will tell you which device you're getting and how to use it.

## After

- Mild soreness or swelling at the ankle for a few days; keep it clean and dry and avoid heavy activity briefly while it heals.
- Benefit **builds over weeks** — many people get at least half-or-better improvement, and the effect lasts for years.
- It can be **turned off or removed** if needed. MRI rules vary by device — always tell any imaging team you have an implant.

### Call your team if you have:

- Redness, swelling, drainage, or fever (possible infection)
- New or worsening pain at the ankle site
- A **sudden loss of benefit** or uncomfortable stimulation

## THREE THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. ITNS is a small implant near the ankle that calms an overactive bladder — the at-home version of PTNS, drug-free and with no whole-body side effects.
2. It's placed in a short outpatient procedure, usually under local anesthesia, and most devices need **no trial period** first.
3. Benefit builds over weeks and lasts for years; call for ankle-site infection, new pain, or a sudden loss of effect.