

## InterStim Therapy

### What is InterStim Therapy?

InterStim Therapy is like a pacemaker for the bladder. It provides a mild, electronic stimulation just below the surface of the skin where the sacral nerves reside. The sacral nerves control all the functions of the pelvis and its organs. The stimulation is provided by an implanted device the size of a silver dollar. The gentle stimulation provided by the InterStim stimulator targets the communication signals from your brain to the sacral nerves. In doing so, the stimulator helps the brain and the sacral nerves communicate clearly and assist in correcting bladder function. There are three stages, Stage 1 – Trial Assessment, Stage 2 – Implantation, and Stage 3 – Patient Follow-up.

### What will during my Trial Assessment?

InterStim is unique in that you undergo a test stimulation prior to placing a permanent implant. A temporary stimulator will be worn around your waist (inside or outside of your clothing) to test the effectiveness of the therapy and see if your bladder control symptoms will be reduced. The trial assessment period is a 6-8 day trial assessment so you can test InterStim without making a long term commitment.

### Here's how it works:

- ♥ Your physician will numb a small area and insert a thin, flexible wire near your sacral nerves. The wire is taped to your skin and connected to a small stimulator which you'll wear on your waistband.
- ♥ The stimulator sends mild electrical pulses through the wire to a sacral nerve which may get your bladder working the way it's supposed to.

During the trial assessment you can continue many of your daily low to moderate level activities with caution. Can usually continue to work throughout your trial assessment if you're job doesn't require strenuous movement. You will be asked to document your urinary symptoms. If you achieve good results from the trial, you and your physician can discuss long-term InterStim Therapy. You will be provided with information regarding how to operate the test stimulator and also inform you of precautions related to the trial assessment and activity restrictions.

### What does the stimulation feel like?

Stimulation varies from person to person, but most people describe it as a slight "pulling" or a "tingling" sensation in the pelvic area. It should not be painful. Talk to your doctor if you have any concerns.

### Are there any restrictions/limitations for Stage 1?

Limit your physical activities. This includes:

- ♥ No heavy lifting or vigorous exercise
- ♥ Avoid bending at waist. If you must bend, bend at the knees
- ♥ Avoid excessive twisting
- ♥ Avoid scrubbing floors, vacuuming, heavy housework, flipping mattresses
- ♥ No sexual relations
- ♥ When moving to and from the bed/couch/car, etc., try not to slide across the surface

## *Comprehensive Urologic Care in a Local Setting*

## **InterStim Therapy**

### **Patient Instruction and Consent Form**

Do not change the dressing. If necessary, you may reinforce the existing dressing with tape.

It is very important to keep the dressing dry and in place. No showers or soaking in a tub. Taking sponge baths is the safest way to stay clean between the two procedures.

You may find it easier to unplug the external gray cable from the test stimulator before changing your clothes, using the toilet or taking a sponge bath. If you choose to unplug the cable before these activities, make sure the “A” dial on the test stimulator box is completely turned off before unplugging the cable and that it remains off when plugging the cable back in.

#### **Driving:**

Turn off the test stimulator box and unplug it if you are **operating** a motor vehicle.

#### **How to turn the test stimulator on/off:**

On top of the test stimulator box is an on/off power dial marked with the letter “A”. This dial is used to activate the test stimulation box and to control the strength of the stimulation. When the box is turned on using the “A” dial, a small green light located next to the dial will flash. The flashing green light indicates the box is functioning properly. If the green light stops flashing, turn the “A” dial completely off, wait five (5) seconds, and then turn it back on to reset the device. If the flashing green light does not return when you turn the dial back on, try changing the 9-volt battery inside the box. A yellow indicator light next to the word “BAT” is another sign that the 9-volt battery is weak and needs to be replaced.

Although the lead wire is secured inside your body, the wire may move slightly as you change positions and as healing occurs. This may cause the stimulation to become more or less intense or to change in quality or location. This is perfectly normal, but you may need to adjust the strength of the stimulation accordingly.

The intensity of the stimulation is under your control. The stimulation should be as high as possible without being uncomfortable. Ideally, the stimulation should be on 24 hours per day.

Adjustments of the dial may be necessary so that you can feel the stimulation, but never to the point of discomfort. Some patients do not always feel the stimulation continuously. This is OK. Our goal is improvement of symptoms.

## **InterStim Therapy**

### **Patient Instruction and Consent Form**

#### **Prior to the procedure:**

Please do not take any blood thinners or medication containing aspirin for seven (7) days prior and three (3) days after the procedure. If you are on Coumadin or Pradaxa please discontinue for five (5) days prior to your procedure. Also, you must call your prescribing physician to inform him/her of the need to discontinue the medication. You may resume these medications 1-3 days after your procedure according to you physician. See attached blood thinner list to assist you.

- ♥ A urine culture is required one week prior to the procedure
- ♥ An antibiotic will be prescribed for you. You will receive twelve (12) pills, start taking the antibiotic the morning of the day BEFORE your procedure, and continue taking every 6 hours until completed. The day of your procedure take one (1) pill in the morning and continue taking every 6 hours until all of the medication is gone. If you forget to take your antibiotics your procedure will be rescheduled
- ♥ Wear comfortable pants such as sweat pants or any loose fitting pants
- ♥ Have a light meal prior to your procedure
- ♥ You will have a follow-up appointment scheduled between 6-8 days after your procedure with the Physician Assistant to remove the leads and to review your results
- ♥ Call us for any reason if you are experiencing discomfort

I have read and understand these instructions:

I give my permission for the above procedure to be performed at Urology Associates of Cape Cod.

Patient Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Comprehensive Urologic Care in a Local Setting***