**Sacral neuromodulation**

**Interstim/Axonics**

**Stage 1: Test Phase (Trial)**

* A temporary lead is placed near the sacral nerve.
* The lead connects to an external stimulator worn on a belt.
* The test period usually lasts **3–14 days** to assess effectiveness.

**Stage 2: Permanent Implant**

* If symptoms improve by **at least 50%** during the trial, a permanent implant is placed under the skin in the upper buttock under light anesthesia
* The lead is connected to a small implantable pulse generator (battery).

**Benefits of Sacral Neuromodulation**

✅ **Minimally invasive and reversible**  
✅ **Effective for various bladder control problems**  
✅ **Improves quality of life and confidence**  
✅ **Trial phase helps determine likelihood of success**  
✅ **Long-term data supports safety and effectiveness**

Many patients report significant improvement or complete resolution of urinary urgency, frequency, and incontinence.

**Risks and Potential Complications**

As with any surgical procedure, SNM carries some risks, including:

* ❗ **Infection at the implant site**
* ❗ **Lead movement or device malfunction**
* ❗ **Pain at the implant site or during stimulation**
* ❗ **Numbness or tingling in legs or pelvic area**
* ❗ **Allergic reaction to implant materials (rare)**
* ❗ **Need for surgical revision or device replacement**
* ❗ **No improvement in symptoms despite the implant**

Most complications are minor and can be resolved with reprogramming or minor surgical adjustments.

**Recovery and Aftercare**

* You may experience mild soreness at the incision site.
* Avoid heavy lifting, bending, and strenuous activity for **2–4 weeks**.
* Follow-up visits are needed to monitor your response and adjust settings.
* The battery typically lasts **5–10 years**, depending on the device and usage.

**Alternatives to SNM**

Before considering SNM, other treatments may be tried:

* Lifestyle changes (bladder training, fluid management)
* Medications (anticholinergics, beta-3 agonists)
* Pelvic floor physical therapy
* Botox bladder injections
* Catheterization (for retention)

**Informed Decision**

We encourage you to ask questions and take time to consider all options. Your provider will discuss whether SNM is appropriate for you and help guide your decision.