

Percutaneous Nerve Stimulation for faecal incontinence



Birmingham Pelvic Floorl Clinic is an established centre for the investigation and treatment of faecal incontinence. Posterior tibial nerve stimulation (PTNS) is a minimally invasive technique doesn't involve any anaesthetics and is normally carried in a series of 1/2 hour out patient treatments given weekly for 12 weeks.

Evidence shows that PTNS is effective in reducing symptoms in the short term and that there are no major safety concerns. It may be recommended as an alternative to sacral nerve modulation.

No anaesthetic is required for the procedure. A fine needle is inserted into the skin on the inside of the ankle, a sticky pad (surface electrode) is placed near the arch of the foot. The needle and electrode are connected to a stimulator. When the stimulator is turned on the foot may bend or the toes spread this may be accompanied by some tingling in the ankle, foot or toes. Initially treatment involves 12 outpatient sessions lasting 30 minutes each, typically a week apart. Treatment may be repeated if required.

What are the risks?

Some patients have reported abdominal pains during the procedure some pain or bruising around the needle sites is possible.

Patients are advised to continue with their normal medications.