

Hours of Operation

Monday–Thursday,
8 a.m.–5 p.m.

Friday,
8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Spinal Cord Stimulator

What is a spinal cord stimulator?

A spinal cord stimulator is a computerized electronic device that stimulates nerves with tiny electrical impulses via small wires placed on the spinal cord. It is an implantable device designed to withstand the hostile environment of the human body. It works by creating an electrical field around the area of the spine that manages sensation. The electrical field scrambles pain impulses so that by the time they reach your brain, they are interpreted as a soothing, tingling sensation.

How will it help me?

The device interrupts nerve pain conduction to brain. The idea is to substitute the pain sensation for a soothing, tingling sensation. It allows you to perceive less pain and therefore, be more comfortable and productive.

How is it performed?

The wires are placed under x-ray guidance and a local anesthetic like Novocain is used to numb the skin and deeper tissues. The procedure is performed in the operating room to maintain sterility. It is done in two stages. In the first stage, temporary wires are placed and an external device is used to generate electrical current. If the trial is successful in relieving pain, then the permanent device is placed under the skin. Each procedure can take up to 3 hours. Success during the trial is considered to be relief of better than 50% of the pain

Will it be painful?

The procedure involves inserting a needle through skin and deeper tissues. So, there is some discomfort involved. However, we numb the skin and deeper tissues with a local anesthetic using a very thin needle prior to inserting the needle. Most of the patients also receive intravenous sedation, which makes the procedure easy to tolerate.

What are the risks and side effects?

The procedure is usually tolerated without side effects. Rare side effects are pain, bleeding, spinal headache, spinal fluid leaks. Flushing of the skin can occur along with some minor discomfort.