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Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

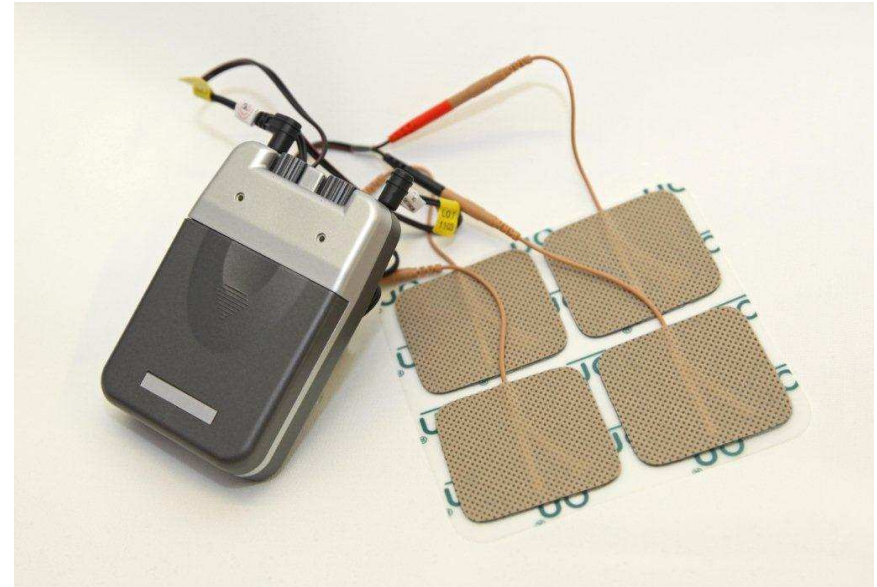
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Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation (TENS)

Pain Management Services



FURTHER INFORMATION

The British Pain Society provides a comprehensive web site that you may find useful at www.britishpainsociety.org

Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty.

If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01932 723553 or email asp-tr.patient.advice@nhs.net. If you remain concerned, the team can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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ADDITIONAL ADVICE

- Keep your TENS machine out of reach of children.
- Remember to remove your TENS unit before bathing or showering.
- Do not lend your TENS machine to anyone else.

The information contained in this leaflet is not intended to replace the instructions provided by the company you purchase your TENS unit from or the advice given to you by your doctor, nurse or the pain service looking after you.

If you are concerned about using TENS, please contact the Pain Clinic Advice Line on **01932 723998**. This is a voicemail service and calls will be returned as soon as possible.

Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulations (TENS)

WHAT IS TENS?

Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) provides a form of pain relief that can be effective for some patients. It does this through the generation of a mild electrical stimulation applied to the skin on or near a painful area giving pain relief in two ways:

1. By inhibiting pain signals to the brain via the spinal cord and peripheral nervous system.
2. Encouraging the body to produce its own pain relief substances called endorphins.

As it is an external treatment it does not interfere with any other medical treatment and is free of side effects such as nausea and drowsiness. Occasionally, skin irritation can occur from the electrode pads.

WHAT IS A TENS MACHINE?

A TENS machine consists of a small control box that contains a battery. Attached to this box are one or two leads, depending on the type of machine you have. At the far end of each lead are attachments for two self-sticking electrode pads. Most modern TENS machines are designed to be portable and fit into a pocket or clip on to a waist band.

ARE THERE ANY CONTRA-INDICATIONS?

TENS produces a mild electrical stimulation that does not cause any harm. However, if you have a cardiac pace maker, certain skin conditions, have epilepsy or are pregnant you should consult your doctor or nurse specialist before using TENS.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

There are many TENS machines on the market most of which include comprehensive operating manuals for use. General advice for standard TENS treatment is:

- Place the electrodes where you feel the pain.
- Place the electrodes on your skin 2 to 4 fingers apart.
- Adjust the controls so that the stimulation you feel is strong but comfortable.
- Use for 30-60 minutes initially checking for any skin irritation caused by the electrode pads.

Thereafter use for up to 4 hours in one session with a break of 30-60 minutes before using again.

- It is advisable to change the position of the electrodes slightly each day to prevent your skin becoming sore.

SKIN CARE

When you first start using the TENS machine it is important to check your skin before and after use for a rash or blisters, as these might indicate that you are allergic to the electrode pads. If this happens, stop using the machine, remove the electrode pads and contact the company you bought your TENS machine from for their advice on electrodes for sensitive skin.

IS IT SAFE FOR ME TO DRIVE WHILE USING TENS?

We do not advise you to drive or operate machinery while using a TENS machine.

Cautions

- Do not place electrodes on the front of the throat as spasm of the neck muscles can occur.
- Do not place electrodes on the front of the neck as there is a small chance these could affect nerves that pass through this area of the neck and regulate your heart rate.
- Electrodes should not be placed over the eyes, in the mouth or internally.