



Patient Procedure Education: Spinal Cord Stimulation (SCS)

What is an SCS?

SCS works by introducing an electrical current into the epidural space near the source of chronic pain impulses. The current creates a sensation that blocks the brain's ability to sense the previously perceived pain.

During this procedure, the physician will thread SCS leads, which are soft, thin wires that produce electrical current, into the epidural space of the spine. The exact placement of the lead is dependent upon the location of the pain. The leads are then connected to a small generator.

SCS is performed in a two-step approach. First, a trial is performed. During the trial, the epidural leads are attached to an external generator. This allows you to test the device on a temporary basis, typically 5 to 7 days. During the trial period, your pain relief, ability to function, and quality of life will be evaluated. If you experience significant improvement, you can have a permanent device implanted, with a small, permanent generator implemented under the skin.

What can I expect during this procedure?

Your procedure will be performed at an outpatient surgery center. You will be asked to arrive one hour before your procedure time. You will first meet with a nurse in the pre-operative area. They will review your medical history, including all current medications and allergies. An IV will be started to administer sedation. You will then be taken into the procedure room and positioned on the procedure table. The trial procedure generally takes 20 to 30 minutes to complete, with the permanent procedure generally taking 1 hour to complete. Following your procedure, you will be taken to the recovery area to rest for approximately 30 minutes before being discharged home. While in the recovery area, you will meet with a representative from the SCS vendor who will provide you with education and materials regarding your device. This representative will also be available throughout your trial and implant period should you have any questions or concerns about the device.

If you are taking any blood thinning medications (i.e. aspirin, Eliquis, Plavix, etc.), please notify our office. It is important we provide you with instructions on holding these medications if necessary. Additionally, if you are taking any antibiotics or have an active infection it is important you notify our office. We may need to delay your procedure until your infection has cleared.

Sedation instructions: you may not have anything by mouth (food or drink) for eight (8) hours prior to your procedure. You may take your regular medications with a sip of water. You must also have a responsible adult (over the age of 18) accompany you and remain at the surgery center during your procedure to assume your care upon discharge. Your responsible adult must be present at the time you check in for your procedure. Taxi cabs and rideshares are not permitted (unless you have a responsible adult present to accompany you). For your safety, we cannot make exceptions to these requirements.

What is the anticipated recovery from the procedure?

Recovery from this procedure is generally mild. You may experience some soreness and pain at the procedure site. For the trial procedure, you will be seen at our office 5 to 7 days after the procedure to remove the trial leads. It is important that you keep record of your pain levels during the trial period.



For the implant procedure, you will be seen at our office 3-5 days after your procedure for a wound check. You will receive detailed discharge instructions at the time of your procedure. You are encouraged to call our office should you have any questions.

Rembrandt Surgery Center phone number: (408) 809-6266

The Pain Experts of Arizona phone number: (480) 550-9393