

PELVIC MUSCLE ELECTRICAL STIMULATION

WHAT IS IT?

Electrical stimulation (ES), also called pelvic muscle stimulation, is a treatment used to aid in the reeducation of muscles after injury, disuse or prolonged muscle spasm. The application of ES to the pelvic floor muscles has been recommended by your health care provider to help with bladder or bowel control.

WHO CAN USE ES?

People with bladder leakage use ES. If you have stress urinary incontinence (leakage with physical activity and increases in intra-abdominal pressure such as cough or sneeze), ES helps build muscle awareness, strength and endurance. If you have urge incontinence (leakage with sudden urge to void), ES helps calm down the bladder and keep it from contracting at the wrong time. Mixed incontinence is a combination of stress and urge incontinence. ES helps as a treatment for mixed incontinence as well.

If you have muscle weakness ES can be used to help you identify the muscles, create a strong awareness of your muscle contraction and provide a timed exercise session.

Inform your health care provider if you have any of the following:

- Urinary retention (inability to empty the bladder completely)
- Decreased sensation in the vaginal or rectal area
- Vaginal or bladder infections or skin lesions
- Pacemaker or seizure disorder
- Current pregnancy or attempting pregnancy

HOW DOES ES WORK?

The muscles and nerves of the bladder can be activated by stimulation from external sources. An internal electrode is placed either vaginally or rectally and attached to a battery operated hand-held machine. The machine has preset readings which deliver a comfortable, timed stimulation to the area causing either the muscles to contract or the bladder to relax and hold more urine. Individual treatment may vary from a few weeks to long-term usage.

HOW DO I START A PROGRAM OF ES?

After a complete examination and evaluation, your health care provider will recommend the proper program. Some people may benefit from short-term rental of home devices and others may choose to purchase a unit. Every insurance plan has different benefits regarding the purchase and rental of medical equipment. Check with your insurance company about your durable medical equipment benefits.