Painful Diabetic Neuropathy

DIABETES QUALIFIED

Do you suffer from burning, tingling, cold, or numb feet and legs? Does this impact your ability to sleep or perform daily activities? Over 300,000 Australians are diagnosed with Painful Diabetic Neuropathy and may benefit from emerging treatments such as high-frequency spinal cord stimulation.

Read on to find out more about a possible alternative treatment option.

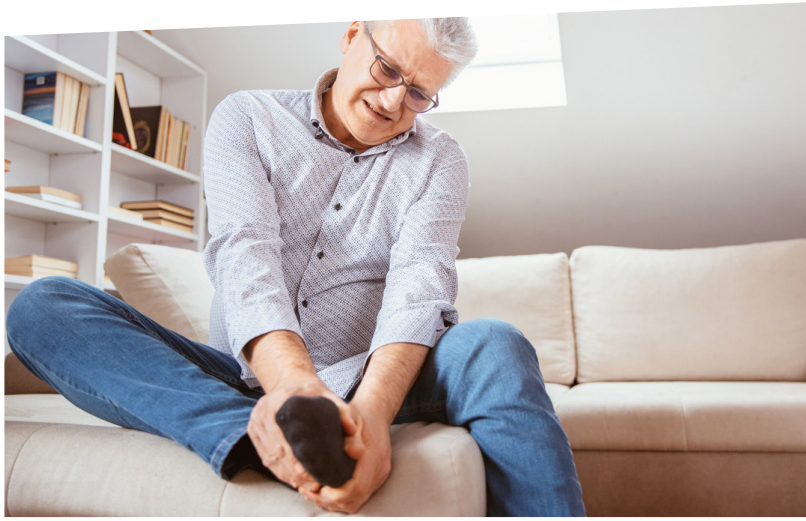
Living with chronic pain, such as painful diabetic neuropathy (PDN), can be a frustrating and debilitating experience that keeps you from doing even the most basic activities. If you or a loved one are not getting the relief you long for from conventional treatments, ask your doctor about 10khz Spinal Cord Stimulation.

Spinal Cord Stimulation is a small implanted device that safely delivers mild and undetectable electrical pulses to the spinal cord. Spinal cord stimulation (SCS), also known as neurostimulation, reduces pain by interrupting the transmission of pain signals to the brain.

Research has shown that 86% of people who used 10khz Spinal Cord Stimulation experienced long-term pain relief. More than 60% of people with painful diabetic neuropathy reported neurological improvements such as less numbness, burning, tingling sensations and 10khz Spinal Cord Stimulation was found to improve sleep due to reduced pain[1].

WHAT IS DIABETIC NEUROPATHY?

Nerves are the communication highways of the body. Our motor nerves control movement and balance, whereas sensory nerves send messages from your body to the brain and control touch, feeling, and pain. Nerves can get damaged by high blood glucose levels over long periods of time, this is referred to in medical terms as Diabetic Neuropathy.



DIABETES QUALIFIED

Diabetic Neuropathy is common. Nearly 50% of people with diabetes develop a form of diabetic neuropathy over time[2]. Around a third of people with diabetic neuropathy complain of painful symptoms, which usually start in the feet and legs[3]. These symptoms can be described as numbness, tingling, burning sensation, sudden sharp pains or cramps. Painful diabetic neuropathy affects your quality of life and increases your risk of amputations by up 16x4.

While not everyone who develops Diabetic Neuropathy will be affected in the same way, for some the symptoms can be disabling, limiting their ability to move and look after themselves. While there is currently no cure for diabetic peripheral neuropathy, there are things you can do to cope with the symptoms.

- Optimise your general health, including keeping your glucose levels, cholesterol levels and blood pressure as close to your target range as possible.
- Check your feet daily at home and get annual foot checks with a health professional.
- Seeing a Pain Specialist to help explore treatment options, this can include medications or 10khz Spinal Cord Stimulation.

SO HOW DOES SPINAL CORD STIMULATION WORK?

There are two stages: a trial to confirm the efficacy and followed by the implant procedure. Both procedures are minimally invasive and reversible.

During a trial, you will receive a temporary, external neurostimulation system for 1- 2 weeks. This gives you an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the spinal cord stimulation without making a long-term commitment.

The implant procedure involves a short minimally invasive procedure where a small battery is implanted, like a pacemaker. Generally, this requires you to spend one night in hospital. The neurostimulator battery is inserted just under the skin through a small incision in the upper buttock. The long-term lead is implanted in the epidural space of the spinal cord and delivers electrical pulses via a tiny lead (wire) to nerves in the spinal cord. Pain signals are blocked by the electrical pulses before they reach the brain. The treatment is reversible, which means that it can be discontinued and surgically removed.

Speak to your healthcare professional team about 10kHz Spinal Cord Stimulation to confirm if therapy is appropriate for you. You can request a referral to one of the pain management centres in Australia via https://www.painaustralia.org.au/find-support/getting-the-right-care-1/pain-directory.

If you would like any further information on 10 kHz Spinal Cord Stimulation, check out https://www.hfxforpdn.com/en-au/

Reference

1. Petersen, E, et. al. Durability of high-frequency 10 kHz spinal cord stimulation for patients with painful diabetic neuropathy refractory to conventional treatments. Diabetes Care, November 2021.
2. Yang, M. et al. Suboptimal Treatment of Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathic Pain in the United States. Pain Medicine. 2015,16: 2075 - 2083.
3. Abbott, C. et al. Prevalence and Characteristics of Painful Diabetic Neuropathy in a Large Community-Based Diabetic Population in the U.K. Diabetes Care, Oct. 2011.
4. Kiyani, Musa et Al, 'Painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy, Health care costs and complications from 2010 to 2015. Neurology, Feb 2020.

HFX