

OAB Therapy 101 Glossary

Electrode — A part that delivers electrical pulses from a stimulation device.

Frequency — Urinating more often than usual.

Incontinence — A strong, sudden urge to urinate causes Involuntary urination.

Nocturia — Waking from sleep to urinate.

Overactive Bladder (OAB) — A group of symptoms including a sudden, difficult-to-control need to urinate. Symptoms may also include frequency, nocturia, urine leakage, and incontinence.

Percutaneous — Through the skin. PTNS therapy begins with a nurse inserting a thin (acupuncture) needle through the skin near the ankle.

Percutaneous Tibial Nerve Stimulation (PTNS) — TNS using a thin (acupuncture) needle electrode and a pad on the arch skin of the foot. This FDA-cleared OAB therapy is the most commonly used TNS in the U.S. Therapy is monthly after 12 weekly, 30-minute treatments.

Revi — An implanted tibial nerve stimulation device powered externally; Treatments, 1/day.

Transcutaneous Nerve Stimulation Device (TENS) — An electrical device with two pad electrodes commonly used in the U.S for a wide variety of nerve and muscle electrical stimulation treatments. TENS devices have not been FDA-cleared for TTNS Therapy.

Tibial Nerve — A nerve that runs down the leg and passes near the inside of the ankle. Stimulating it can affect nerve signals involved in bladder control.” The FDA notes that the exact mechanism and connection to bladder control is not known.

Tibial Nerve Stimulation (TNS) — Electrical stimulation of the tibial nerve to address OAB symptoms. Some patients may achieve better ability to control urgency. We discuss four ways to deliver electrical stimulation at sites on the leg and foot. These therapies may be very effective for many but are not effective for all patients. Experience is the only way to know if it will be effective for a particular patient.

Transcutaneous — Across the skin.

Transcutaneous Tibial Nerve Stimulation (TTNS) — TTNS uses a TENS device with two pad electrodes in various leg/foot locations. The TENS device is not FDA-cleared for TTNS, but the therapy is common outside the U.S. Therapy may be monthly after initiation.

Urgency — A sudden, difficult-to-control need to urinate.

Vivally — In 2023 the FDA-cleared the first surface-electrode TNS device in the U.S. The patient uses a Velcro fitting to locate the electrodes near the ankle and foot. Therapy treatments are 3 times weekly.