

CONNECTICUT VALLEY HOSPITAL

Physical Therapy Services

PT Equipment Procedure #22

Re: TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation)

Date: March 20, 2000

Revised: October 19, 2008

Description:

TENS is a portable electrical stimulating unit that decreases pain by bombarding the nerve receptors and thus fatiguing the pain receptors.

Indications:

The indications for the TENS Unit are for the symptomatic relief and management of chronic, intractable pain, and as an adjunct treatment in the management of post-surgical and post-traumatic acute pain problems.

1. Spinal Injuries
2. Post-operative Pain
3. Phantom Limb Pain
4. Arthritic Pain
5. Acute pain Associated with Sprains and Strains
6. Chronic Tendonitis and Tenosynovitis

Contraindications:

There are no contraindications to the usage of TENS. Care should be taken when using TENS with the following conditions:

1. Individuals with Cardiac Conditions
2. Do not Stimulate Over Carotid Sinus
3. Individuals with Cardiac Pacemakers
4. Individuals with Skin Irritations or Open Wounds

Procedure:

1. Apply impregnated electrode pads to area of pain usually with channels crossing painful area.
2. Plug cables into electrodes.
3. Plug cables into stimulator jacks.
4. Check 9V battery.
5. Slowly increase stimulation by increasing the intensity knobs on Channel 1 (CH1) and Channel 2 (CH2).

6. Internal Controls may need to be adjusted.
 - a) **Rate:** Pulse rate may be adjusted to increase or decrease the number of electrical pulses that are sent through the skin each second.
 - b) **Pulse Width:** Duration of each electrical pulse may be increased or decreased.
 - c) **Mode:** The mode should remain on continuous or normal, as this will provide standard stimulation.
7. If the TENS unit is given to patient, a specific MD order is needed in the chart. If the TENS unit is given to patient for usage following discharge from the hospital, a specific MD order is needed in the chart.
8. Clean TENS Units as per Physical Therapy Cleaning Procedures.