

Department of Neuroscience

682-885-2500

Neurologist: _____

Appointment: 2 weeks after surgery.

Date: _____

Neurosurgeon: _____

Appointment: 1 month after surgery.

Date: _____

After VNS surgery

VNS will start working as soon as we turn it on. We use a very low setting.

1. Puffiness around incisions

You will have a small neck incision. You also have a small incision in 1 of 3 places:

- Below collarbone on chest wall
- In the armpit
- On upper back

2. Low grade fever

Less than 101 degrees is okay.

During VNS stimulation, you may have:

- Changes in your voice tone
- Hoarseness or coughing
- Trouble swallowing
- Discomfort

What to do at home

1. Dressing

You may have a gauze pad covered with a clear plastic dressing over 2 incision areas.

Keep dressings clean and dry.

- You can remove dressings on 2nd day after surgery.
- Your doctors will tell you when you can take a shower and tub bath.
- Do not do things that make you sweat. Sweating carries bacteria into incision site.

2. Pain

- You may get a prescription for pain medicine.
- If you did **not** get a prescription and your child has pain you may use a non-aspirin medicine such as:

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
- OR**
- Ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®)

If your child is younger than 6 months old, **DO NOT give Ibuprofen (Motrin).**

Always follow the label instructions for dosing

Know your child's medicines

Many prescription and over the counter pain, cold, and flu medicines contain acetaminophen (Tylenol). Talk to your doctor or pharmacist before taking any medicines that contain acetaminophen (Tylenol). Taking acetaminophen with other medicines may cause an overdose or bad reaction.

3. Activities

Depending on your incision site, you can return to normal activity when you feel ready.

- Do not take PE class, play sports, climb or play rough until your doctors OK it.
- Sometimes you may go home the same day of surgery.



When to call your doctor

Neurosurgeon: _____

1. Incision

- Area around incision becomes red.
- You see yellow discharge from incision.

2. Fever

- You have a fever over 101 degrees.
- Have fever lasting longer than 48 to 72 hours past surgery.

Neurosurgeon notes

Neurologist: _____

1. VNS device

You have concerns about the stimulator's operation or effects such as:

- Device becomes uncomfortable.
- Stimulation seems to be coming on too often.
- Stimulation stops working.

2. Feeling Different

- Problems with swallowing or sleeping.
- A small child who cannot talk starts acting "different" than usual.

3. Breathing

Call if your child has pauses in their breathing. This is called sleep apnea.

Neurologist notes

After doctor's appointment

Using the magnet

You may use the magnet 2 weeks after your surgery.

1. Automatically

VNS system delivers stimulation automatically lasting:

- 30 seconds on
- 5 minutes off

2. Extra stimulation

You can also use magnet to deliver extra electronic stimulation when you feel a seizure coming on.

- Patients or family can use the magnet to stimulate an electrical discharge.
- Extra stimulation occasionally stops a seizure, shortens it, or reduces recovery time.

3. Turn off stimulation

You can also use the magnet to turn off the programmed stimulation for a period of time. This may be helpful in situations where you:

- Plan to speak publicly
- While you are eating (if the stimulation makes swallowing difficult)
- If you are experiencing pain or unusual discomfort.

Remember to refer to your VNS booklet for questions about the magnets and their use.

These instructions are only general guidelines. Your doctor may give you special instructions. If you have questions or concerns, please call your doctor.



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Vagus Nerve Stimulator (VNS) Discharge instructions

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Above information reviewed using Teachback.

Staff Initials _____

1. I have a copy of these instructions.
2. I know what I need to do.
3. I know why doing this is important.

Patient/Parent or Legally Authorized Representative

Date

Time

Healthcare Provider Signature

If interpreter used:

Name or ID: _____

Date/Time: _____



Patient label