

Congratulations for beginning Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Why is the therapy called PTNS?

PTNS stands for percutaneous tibial nerve stimulation. Percutaneous means that the therapy is delivered through a needle puncture in the skin. Tibial nerve calls out the specific nerve that is being used. The tibial nerve runs the entire length of your leg. Stimulation defines the nature of the therapy. PTNS uses gentle stimulation, also sometimes referred to as neuromodulation, to affect the nerves responsible for bladder control.

Why the ankle?

The amazing thing about our bodies is that things are all interconnected. In fact, bladder control doesn't just involve the bladder but also the brain, spinal cord and various nerves. If you have an overactive bladder, it's because your bladder nerves are sending extra signals to the brain, saying that the bladder should be emptied, even when it's not full.

There are multiple ways to influence these overactive nerves. Surprisingly, one of these ways is by stimulating the tibial nerve by placing a needle electrode near your ankle. Impulses to the tibial nerve travel the length of your leg from ankle to pelvis – where they continue to the nerves in your pelvis which control bladder function. The reason why the ankle is used in Urgent PC PTNS therapy is because it's an easy, non-surgical, low-risk way to stimulate the tibial nerve.

When will I improve?

Urgent PC PTNS is a gentle, gradual treatment focused on retraining the nerves that affect bladder control. Like any sort of training, this process takes time. That's why 12 treatments are prescribed to determine if the therapy is right for you.

While everyone is different, most people begin to see substantial improvement after 5-6 treatments. However, some people respond much sooner and some people respond much later. In fact, when one clinic reviewed their records, they found that successful patients improved anywhere between 2 and 12 weeks.¹

But just because big changes don't usually happen until at least halfway through the sessions, it doesn't mean that you're not improving. Keeping a voiding diary can be a great way to recognize little changes as you wait for the bigger improvements.



1. Visit www.cogentixmedical.com to view clinical abstracts.

Setting Treatment Goals

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

What are you hoping for?

Setting realistic goals up front can be helpful in reminding yourself why you wanted help for your OAB and in determining if Urgent PC PTNS therapy is hitting the mark.

Setting treatment goals

Over 50 clinical publications show that Urgent PC PTNS therapy works in up to 80% of patients and reduces urgency, the number of bathroom visits and urinary accidents.¹ However, what makes these changes meaningful is how they tie into your own personal goals. What would it take for you to consider this treatment a success?

- ☐ Going less often
- ☐ More warning time to get to the bathroom
- ☐ Less severe urgency
- ☐ Leaking less urine
- ☐ Sleeping through the night
- ☐ Less urinary accidents
- ☐ Sitting through an entire movie
- ☐ Dinner out without having to use the bathroom
- ☐ A car trip without stopping at every rest stop
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



Looking for guidance?

Your provider will be able provide insight on what goals are realistic given your age and other health factors. Once you've determined your goals, you may want to post them in a place where you can see them throughout your treatments. While Urgent PC PTNS therapy works for the majority of patients, it does take time. So, make sure you continue to complete your voiding diary a day or two before your next appointment, or as requested by your provider.

¹. Visit www.cogentixmedical.com to view clinical abstracts.

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Continue with “Conservative”

Unfortunately, there is no miracle cure for overactive bladder that will magically fix everything without time and effort. Even proven therapies like Urgent PC PTNS work better when patients continue to pay attention to “conservative” measures such watching food and beverage choices and staying active. Here are some key things to keep in mind.

Keep drinking

- » Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily
- » Half of your total fluids should be water
- » Drink most of your fluids before dinner
- » Don’t drink too much liquid at once (sip instead of gulp)



Bladder irritants to avoid or consume in moderation

- » Beverages and foods containing caffeine (chocolate, tea, coffee, soda)
- » Carbonated beverages (carbonated sodas, carbonated water)
- » Highly acidic or spicy foods
- » Citrus fruits (grapefruit, oranges, lemons, limes)
- » Tomato products
- » Artificial sweeteners (sugar-free foods, diet drinks)
- » Alcohol
- » Alternating water with bladder irritants can help control symptoms

Prevent constipation

- » Stay well hydrated
- » Eat fiber (24-30 grams a day)

Keep your weight at a normal level

- » Losing a few pounds might help you get your bladder symptoms under control. In a 6-month study, an 8% weight loss in obese women (20 lb loss for a 250 lb woman) cut the number of incontinence episodes nearly in half!¹

1. Subak, L.L., et al. (2009). Weight Loss to Treat Urinary Incontinence in Overweight and Obese Women. *N Engl J Med*, 360, 481-490,

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Pelvic floor exercises

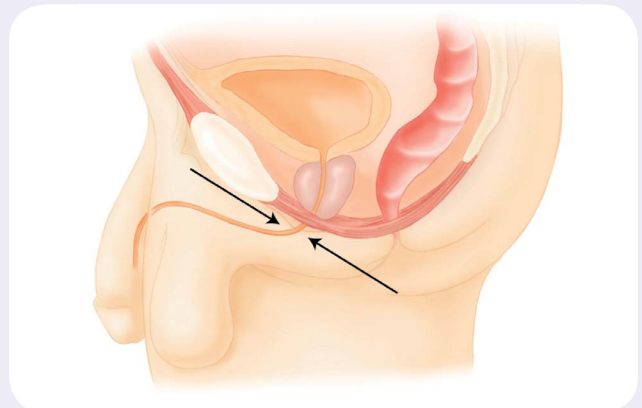
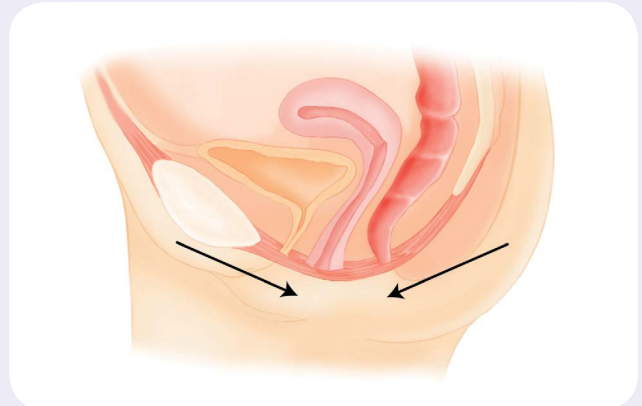
Pelvic floor exercises, sometimes referred to as Kegels, are used to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles and make it easier to hold your urine longer. The pelvic floor muscles are located between your legs, and run from your pubic bone at the front to the base of your spine at the back. They are shaped like a sling and hold your pelvic organs (uterus, vagina, bowel and bladder) in place. Locating the correct muscles to use can be a little tricky so don't be embarrassed to ask your provider for help!

How to perform pelvic floor exercises

1. Locate your correct pelvic muscles. It is important to isolate this group of muscles, and not use any other muscles such as abdominals or buttocks. Think about how you must squeeze your pelvic muscles in order to prevent "passing gas" in public or to hold back a bowel movement.
2. To perform the pelvic floor exercise, squeeze your pelvic floor muscles for 5 seconds, then relax for 10 seconds.
3. Pelvic floor exercises should be performed when sitting, standing and laying down. Repeat 10 times in each position.
4. Make these exercises part of your daily routine by doing them when you do a daily task in that particular position. For example, watching TV, bathing, or responding to an email. Habits are formed with repetition.

Things to remember

- » Try to isolate the muscles in the pelvic floor. When looking at yourself naked in the mirror, you should not see your stomach, thighs or buttocks move. However, men can expect to see the tip of their penis rise slightly with each successful contraction.
- » Breathe freely, do not hold your breath.
- » Do not do these exercises when you're tired or while driving.



Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Urge suppression techniques

Is Urgent PC PTNS therapy going well? Has tingling in your toes resulted in better bladder control? Either way, hang in there. It's still early in the process. So it's likely that the best improvements are yet to come! In the meantime, these urge suppression techniques may help.

What to do when the urge strikes

Step 1: Stop

- » Stop all movement and stand very still. Sit down if possible.
- » Remain calm and confident. You can do this.

Step 2: Squeeze

- » Do 5 quick, strong pelvic muscle contractions. This sends a message to the bladder to stop the feeling of urgency.
- » Try not to contract your abdominal muscles as you squeeze.

Step 3: Relax

- » Take several slow deep breaths.
- » Release the tension from your shoulders, back and the rest of your body.
- » Concentrate on controlling the feeling of urgency. Distract yourself by thinking about something else. Visualizing a hot, dry place like the desert works for some people.

Step 4: Go

- » When the urge is under control, walk calmly to the bathroom; rushing can jostle your bladder and increase the feeling of urgency. Plus, walking normally makes it easier to focus on controlling the urge.
- » If the urge comes back on the way to the bathroom, repeat the above steps.
- » If you are able to, wait a few minutes before going to the bathroom. Extending the time between bathroom visits can help in achieving a more normal voiding pattern. The goal is to have at least 2-3 hours between voids.

If you have the urge at night

Lie still; perform 5 quick pelvic floor contractions. Then, try to go back to sleep. If you must go, sit on the edge of the bed. Relax and walk calmly to the bathroom. In the older adult, it is considered normal to urinate once per night.



Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Finding things to celebrate

You're halfway into your initial Urgent PC PTNS therapy sessions. How have you improved? Before answering, review your treatment goals and voiding diary from when you began treatment. You may discover that you've made more progress than you think. While the changes may have been great or small, it's a good idea to celebrate your successes along the way. Up to 80% of patients have substantial improvement by the end of 12 weeks.¹ Changes with Urgent PC PTNS therapy can be so gradual that you may not realize they are happening.



Less bathroom visits?

You may still be going more than you like, but is it less of a hassle? Are you sleeping for longer stretches? Are you able to sit through a movie with your grandkids? Are you brave enough to take a car trip AND skip a rest stop?

Less urgency?

You may still have urgency but is it less severe? Are you less obsessed with the location of bathrooms? Are you able to keep urgency under control with urge suppression techniques.

Fewer accidents?

You may still be having accidents but are you having fewer? Are you using less pads? Have you switched to a lighter-weight pad?

The best is yet to come!

If you haven't yet seen the level of results you were hoping for, you're not alone. Data shows that, for most patients, the best is yet to come. In one study, the number of patients showing moderate or marked improvement in their symptoms doubled between weeks 7 and 14.²

1. Visit www.cogentixmedical.com to view clinical abstracts.
2. Sand, P., Peters, K., Carrico, D. (2011). SUMiT Trial Outcomes: Clinical Insights Into Percutaneous Tibial Nerve Stimulation. Presented at the International Continence Society (ICS) Annual Meeting, Glasgow, UK.

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

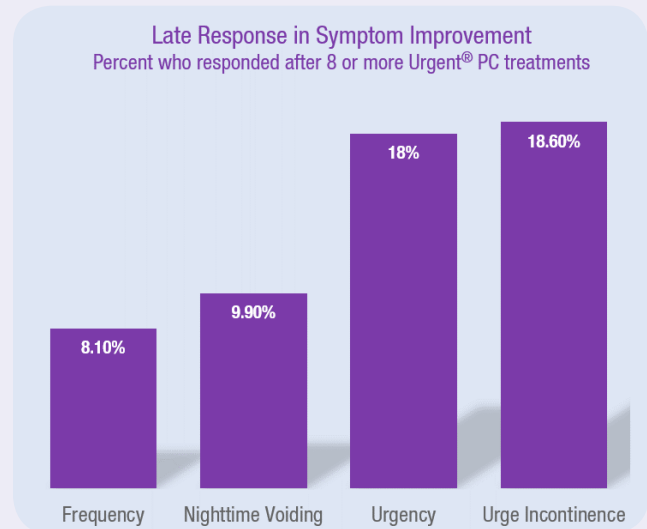
What if I haven't responded yet?

You probably know that it's typical to see substantial improvements by midway through your Urgent PC PTNS therapy sessions but responding later isn't uncommon. In fact, in a clinical review of 141 patients, some successful patients did not see substantial improvements in symptoms until after 8 treatments. For example, nearly 20% of successful patients only noticed substantial improvements in their urge incontinence (urinary accidents) after they received between 8 and 12 Urgent PC PTNS treatments.¹

Will I still get good results?

It's important to remember that **WHEN** you respond is unrelated to **HOW** you respond. Patients who respond after 8 weeks can still have significant, life-changing improvements.

Christy was one of those patients who didn't see treatment results right away. Her case of overactive bladder was extremely severe and she had tried all other available options before being treated with Urgent PC. Once she started, her symptoms improved gradually. "I actually did it for more than 12 weeks before I saw significant, miraculous improvement," she said. For Christy, it was worth the wait, "This is the first thing and the only thing that showed any difference whatsoever. It's been a lifesaver."²



Keep with it!

While it's easy to give up if you feel like Urgent PC PTNS therapy isn't working for you, there are good reasons to stick with it. You, and your bladder, have made an investment in this therapy and there's still a sizable chance you'll respond — 80% of patients do.³

1. Leong, F., McLennan, M.T., Barr, S.A., & Steele, A.C. (2011). Posterior tibial nerve stimulation in patients who have failed anticholinergic therapy: efficacy and time to response. *Female Pelvic Med Reconstr Surg*, 17(2), 74-5.
2. To view Christy's story and others, visit www.urgentpcinfo.com.
3. Visit www.cogentixmedical.com to view clinical abstracts.

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Committing to a better bladder

It's a common situation. A patient has a great response to Urgent PC PTNS therapy. The patient finally feels normal and free from the bothers of an Overactive Bladder. Life is good. Then the patient's symptoms seem to reappear overnight.

What happened? It may be that the patient is making different lifestyle choices now that they feel more normal. For most patients, continued success takes continued commitment to better bladder habits. Another possible cause may be a bladder infection. So, make sure to talk to your provider if your bladder symptoms get worse instead of better.



Pelvic floor exercises

Pelvic floor exercises are a good option for even the healthiest of bladders. Keep them as part of your daily routine to improve urine flow and help hold your pelvic organs in place. And, when you feel a sudden urge, remember to practice good urge suppression techniques.

Good voiding habits

Having a happy bladder can make you feel like a super hero but it doesn't mean that you have a bladder of steel. Use your voiding diary to identify what is a typical length between your bathroom visits and when you feel urgency. Keep this in mind, especially if you won't have access to a bathroom for a period of time.

Food and beverage choices

Maybe you love iced coffee, spicy Thai food or a good glass of wine. Who can blame you? Of course, all of these things can be bladder irritants. That doesn't mean that you never consume them; it's just that you need to be smart about when and how much. If you feel like your symptoms are returning, take notes in your voiding diary about what and when you're eating and drinking. This will be great information to share during your next appointment.

Stick with Urgent PC PTNS therapy

Changes with Urgent PC are gradual. Regardless of the degree of improvements at this point, it is important to complete all 12 initial treatments to determine your level of treatment response.

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Reasonable expectations

Once you've achieved your treatment goals, you might start wondering how far Urgent PC PTNS therapy can take you. While it's human nature to always want more, it's important to understand what improvements are realistic and normal.

What's normal?

Living with an overactive bladder, you're well aware of what's NOT normal: voiding multiple times in an hour, getting up numerous times every night, having urinary accidents. But would it surprise you that even with a "normal" bladder, it's usual to void 6-8 times a day, and for older adults, it's typical to get up once during the night?

The reality is that even without an overactive bladder there are bound to be changes as we get older. Time is not kind to our bladders, making them less stretchy and reducing the amount of urine they can hold. Bladder muscles also weaken, making pelvic floor exercises especially important. In addition, your bladder may not be able to tolerate bladder irritants like it used to.

While a therapy like Urgent PC PTNS can help alleviate the symptoms of an overactive bladder, it cannot turn back time to when you could drink two pots of coffee and still go for hours without a bathroom break.



Be positive and realistic

Try not to compare your bladder habits and treatment results with others. Everyone is different! Instead, remind yourself of how far you've come by taking a look at your voiding diary and treatment goals. Next, identify how your lifestyle choices may be impacting your results. If you're still discouraged, talk to your provider!

Remember that, for some patients, the full extent of their improvements isn't obvious until the end of the 12 weeks so it's a good idea to complete all treatments before determining if this therapy is right for you.

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

What's next?

If you are happy with the results of Urgent PC PTNS therapy, the next step will be occasional treatments to help you maintain your improvements. If you don't think that Urgent PC PTNS is the right long-term treatment for you, talk to your provider about other options. Either way, you owe it to yourself to make a plan for long-term success!

The goal of ongoing Urgent PC PTNS therapy is to maintain your symptom improvements with as few treatments as possible. This level is different for each patient. While once a month is typical, it varies greatly. Your provider will have their own way of providing ongoing treatment but most fall into one of three approaches. In some cases, the approach may depend on your insurance coverage.

Approach 1: Plus one

This method adds one week between treatments as you are able to keep your symptoms under control. In this case, your provider will have you come back two weeks after your twelfth treatment. Then, if it goes well, they will extend that to three weeks between sessions. At each check-up your provider will discuss your symptom control and whether you can go another week before your next treatment. If symptoms start to reoccur, the time between treatments is reset to the level that allowed you to keep your symptoms under control.

Approach 2: Aim high

With this approach, providers set the follow-up appointment for one month out. If symptoms start to return, patients are typically instructed to call for a sooner appointment.

Approach 3: As needed

Some providers leave the timing of follow-up appointments up to their patients. In this case, you'd contact your provider if you need another treatment.

Your personal treatment plan

Here is some helpful information to support you as you continue with Urgent® PC PTNS therapy. Please contact our office if you have questions about your care.

Look at how far you've come!

Just a few months ago, you started your Urgent PC PTNS journey. Remember how bad your symptoms were? If not, check your first voiding diary. Look at you now ... ready to take on the world — or at least a short road trip.

Of course, if you're like most people, you still have your own personal challenges, especially when it comes to food and beverage choices. Remaining aware of these challenges and making good choices will help keep your bladder symptoms under control.

If you haven't already done so, take the opportunity to ask your provider about what's next. Don't walk away without a long-term plan. You owe it to yourself!



Questions about what's next

When should I come in for my next session? What if my symptom control starts to slip before then?

How can I make sure that my personal challenges don't get in the way of my long-term success?

Are there other things I should do?

Other questions?

Congratulations!

You've completed twelve Urgent® PC PTNS therapy sessions. Now is the time to review your bladder diary, comparing your urinary frequency, urinary urgency, urinary accidents and fluid management to where you were in the beginning. How do you feel about the results?

Moving into ongoing therapy

Even if you feel like you're ready to take on the world, it's important to remember that you will still need to do your part to keep your symptoms under control. Continue to keep your Urgent PC PTNS therapy appointments and to practice good bladder habits. You can drink that extra cup of coffee but maintain a keen awareness of urgency. Don't postpone your bathroom visit for too long, thinking you can do "just one more thing." Let your provider know if your symptoms return between treatments. These things matter and can contribute to long-term success.

What are your concerns?

It's understandable to have lingering concerns about moving away from weekly treatments. However, this is the normal course of Urgent PC PTNS therapy and the majority of patients are able to maintain improvements with the occasional treatment.

Talk to your provider about your concerns. They want you to succeed and to feel comfortable with your ongoing treatment plan!

Notes

