

TALKING TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT DBS
Questions written by the family of a patient
who underwent the procedure

PRE-SURGERY	
Who is a candidate?	What symptoms is DBS most effective for? How long does treatment last?
Pre-op testing	What's required?
DBS devices	Medtronic; Abbott/St. Jude; Boston Scientific? Surgeon's and movement disorder specialist's experience with each type? Pros/cons of each?
Lead/electrode placement	Subthalamic nucleus (STN) or globus pallidus interna (GPi)? Placement on both sides of brain or one?
Battery	
Type of battery	Rechargeable or non-rechargeable? Pros/cons of each?
Placement of battery	Collarbone or abdomen?
Expected battery life	How frequently does battery need to be replaced?
Rechargeable battery	Equipment needed to recharge battery? How often does battery need to be recharged and how long does it take? How to know when battery needs recharging?
Medications	Need to stop medications prior to surgery? If so, when?
Cost	Is DBS covered by insurance? Does coverage vary for different devices?
Procedure	
Describe process	Awake? Asleep?
Potential risks	What are the potential risks of the procedure (bleeding, stroke, seizure, infection, other)?
Number of procedures	Separate procedures to implant leads and battery or one procedure? Pros/cons for each? Are leads implanted on one side or both sides of brain?
Hospital stays	Required? Duration?
Post-surgery considerations	
Programming	Who programs the DBS device? How often do you have to visit the doctor for programming?
Other considerations	Any limitations on MRIs, x-rays or other medical or dental procedures?

Notes

POST-SURGERY	
Medications	If stopped prior to surgery, when to resume? What dose?
Post-op follow-up	What to expect in terms of pain, soreness, swelling? When do stitches or staples come out?
Programming	When does this start? Who programs the device? How frequently are adjustments made? How is “normal” established? Can patient control?
Potential side effects	Will it affect speech or voice, balance, thinking or memory functions (such as focusing) or mood?
Return to work	How soon after?
Driving	How soon after?
Other limitations	Ok to drink alcohol? Are there restrictions on exercise or weight lifting?
Notes	

For more information on individual DBS devices, visit the manufacturer’s websites:

- [Medtronic](#)
- [Abbott/St. Jude](#)
- [Boston Scientific](#)

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