

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

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| PRE-SURGERY | |
| Who is a candidate? | What symptoms is DBS most effective for? How long does treatment last? |
| Pre-op testing | What's required? |
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| 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? |
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| 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? |

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| Notes |
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| 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](#)
- [St. Jude](#)
- [Boston Scientific](#)

NOTE: The medical information contained in this article is for general information purposes only. The Michael J. Fox Foundation has a policy of refraining from advocating, endorsing or promoting any drug therapy, course of treatment, or specific company or institution. It is crucial that care and treatment decisions related to Parkinson's disease and any other medical condition be made in consultation with a physician or other qualified medical professional.