

Electrical stimulation to improve muscle strength in chronic respiratory conditions, chronic heart failure and chronic kidney disease

Information for the public
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Chronic respiratory conditions, chronic heart failure and chronic kidney disease can cause muscle weakness. In this procedure, small electrical impulses are delivered to weakened muscles, usually in the arms or legs, using electrodes placed on the skin. The aim is to contract the muscles, making them stronger.

This procedure can be used for people having an acute flare-up of their chronic condition if they are unable to exercise. For people who are able to exercise, this procedure can only be done as part of a research study, because there is not enough evidence to be sure how well it works compared with exercise.

There are no serious concerns about the safety of this procedure.

The [NHS website](#) may be a good place to find out more. NICE's information on [HealthTech guidance](#) has more about what a procedure is and how we assess them.

Is this procedure right for me?

If you've been offered this procedure, your healthcare professionals should discuss with you what is involved, and explain the research study, and tell you about the risks and benefits. They should talk with you about your options, and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. All of this should happen before you agree (consent) to have the procedure and to be in the study. You should also be told how to find more information about the procedure. Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Some questions to think about

- What does the procedure involve?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- What happens if the procedure doesn't work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I don't want the procedure? Are there other treatments available?

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