

# **Electrotherapy**

## **A Simple Guide to Coding and Billing**

## **Unit Types:**

**TENS units** -- TENS is effectively used to treat all types of chronic and acute pain.

Just about anything for which you would take an aspirin, Tylenol, or any other pain medication can probably be effectively relieved with a TENS unit.

The TENS stimulator is a battery-powered device which transmits an electrical impulse through lead wires and surface electrodes to underlying nerves. The stimulator converts the direct current of the battery into pulses of stimulation. The current travels through electrodes and into the skin stimulating specific nerve pathways to produce a tingling or massaging sensation that reduces the perception of pain.

When used as directed; TENS is a safe, non-invasive, drug-free method of pain management. It is used to offer a better quality of life for people with pain.

**EMS units** -- In addition to the pain relief offered by TENS, Muscle Stim (or EMS) is widely used by healthcare professionals in the treatment of patients to:

- strengthen muscles
- prevent atrophy
- maintain & increase range of motion
- keep muscles viable
- limit edema
- delay muscle fibrosis
- reduce abnormal muscle tone
- reduce muscle spasm
- increase fibril contraction
- accelerate blood circulation
- promote metabolism
- rehabilitate stroke patients

**Microcurrent units** -- Microcurrent therapy is often recommended in cases involving soft tissue inflammation or muscle spasm. Since Microcurrent therapy mimics the body's electrical fields, it is helpful in relieving pain and stimulating the healing of soft tissues.

- Can help speed the healing process
- Reduces swelling and inflammation
- Masks acute and chronic pain
- Releases muscle trigger points
- Improves soft tissue regeneration

**Portable Ultrasound units** -- Delivers sound waves that penetrate the skin's surface causing soft tissues to vibrate creating deep heat. In turn, the heat induces vasodilation: drawing blood into the target tissues. Increased blood flow delivers needed oxygen and nutrients, and removes cell wastes.

The deep heat helps to relieve pain, inflammation, reduces muscle spasms, and accelerates healing. Depending on the treatment area, range of motion may be increased.

## **Insurance Coding:**

When coding for electrotherapy units, it is suggested that the codes below are used for each of the types of equipment specified.

You will want to use the correct modifier when coding to indicate whether the item is being rented or purchased by the patient. Some insurance companies will only pay for the purchase of the item after a rental of the item has previously been billed. In most cases, rental modifiers are "R" or "RR" and most purchase modifiers are "P" or "40". Check with the appropriate insurance for exact modifiers.

**TENS Unit – E0730**

**EMS Unit – E0745**

**MicroCurrent Unit – E1399**

**Ultrasound Unit – E1399**

**Electrodes – A4556 or A4595 (these will always be purchase)**

## **Insurance Billing:**

It is always recommended that prior to distributing any of the units to the patient, a call is made to the insurance company to verify the eligibility of the patients and that the patient's policy benefits cover the specific insurance code(s) listed above for the item(s) being prescribed, and if the item may be distributed to the patient as a purchase or if the item needs to be billed as a rental item.

Once verified, the items may be distributed to the patient. You will then submit the initial claim for the rental or purchase of the unit as a paper claim accompanied with the completed and signed **Letter of Medical Necessity** (Addendum A) that is included with each unit. You will want to keep a copy of this Letter of Medical Necessity for the patient's chart as well as normal documentation in the patient file stating that the unit has been prescribed to the patient.

TENS units are the most common unit and are most widely covered by most insurance carriers. EMS units are not always covered so it is a good idea to check patient benefits. Microcurrent units and Ultrasound units do not have their own billing codes and instead use a miscellaneous billing code, so it is also best to check coverage for these items prior to distribution. In respect to auto claims and workers' comp, all of the units are covered in most circumstances.

Below are examples of insurance billing for each of the items. With the exception of the Ultrasound unit, all of the other units will bill for the unit and accompanying electrodes.

### **Suggested billing amounts**

TENS Unit (Rental) -- \$225

TENS Unit (Purchase) -- \$495

EMS Unit (Rental) -- \$250

EMS Unit (Purchase) -- \$595

Microcurrent Unit (Rental) -- \$250

Microcurrent Unit (Purchase) -- \$595

Portable Ultrasound Unit (Rental) -- \$225

Portable Ultrasound Unit (Purchase) -- \$495

Electrodes -- \$27 (per pack of 4)

### **Below is an example of sample billing for a TENS unit:**

If billing **rental** of the unit first, billing will be as follows:

Day 1 – Bill for TENS unit rental - E0730 "R" for \$225 (send paper claim in with Letter of Medical Necessity)

Day 7 – Bill for 12 packs of electrodes (a 3-month supply) - A4556 "P" for \$324 (send claim either by paper or electronically)

Day 31 – Bill for TENS unit purchase – E0730 "P" for \$495 (send claim either by paper or electronically)

Bill for any additional electrodes requested by the patient in the future.

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If billing **purchase** of the unit, billing will be as follows:

Day 1 – Bill for TENS unit rental - E0730 "P" for \$495 (send paper claim in with Letter of Medical Necessity)

Day 7 – Bill for 12 packs of electrodes (a 3-month supply) - A4556 "P" for \$324 (send claim either by paper or electronically)

Bill for any additional electrodes requested by the patient in the future.

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**This same model will be used for billing an EMS or Microcurrent unit, substituting the appropriate HCPCS code and billing amount for the item.**

**For the Ultrasound Unit, this model would also be used except that no electrodes would be provided, therefore no electrode claim would be sent.**

# Prescription Form-- Letter of Medical Necessity

Physician notes, previous treatments

## Patient Name:

Recommended Usage:                      Daily                                      x per week

## Is this an injury related to:

ICD ( Codes Applicable

Workers Compensation	Y	N
Auto Accident	Y	N

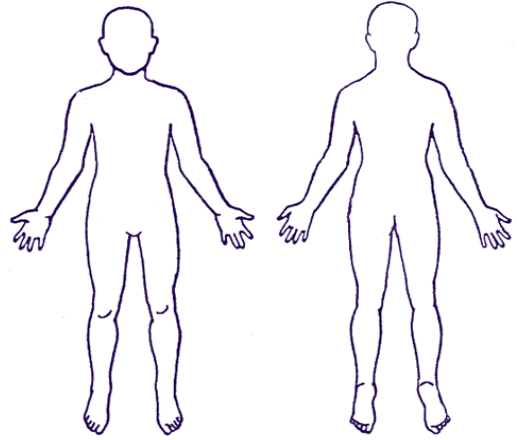
Area(s) to be treated

Pain Severity                      Chronic                      Severe                      Intractable  
   Mild                                      Moderate

Symptoms:

Objective findings

Assessment



Prognosis  
(circle one)      Excellent      Good      Fair      Guarded

Period of Medical Necessity      6 months      9 months      12 months

Date First Diagnosed

Unit Prescribed

Date Last Seen

( ) TENS/Microcurrent with Supplies

( ) EMS with supplies

Areas(s) to be treated

( ) Lumbar Brace                      size

( ) Pneumatic Cervical  
Traction                      size

Previous Treatments

( ) Galvanic / Interferential                      (circle one)

( ) Other

I certify that the above prescribed equipment is both reasonable and medically necessary as part of the patient's treatment plan unless otherwise noted.

PHYSICIAN'S NAME

TELEPHONE #

& Address

Fax #

UPIN / License #

PHYSICIAN'S SIGNATURE

DATE

\_\_\_\_\_

An  
Easy Guide to  
TENS Pain Relief

A book of indications, electrode placement  
& suggested protocol settings

## Electrode Placement and Charts

### The importance of accurate electrode placement

Proper electrode placement is vital to obtain the best results from your TENS unit. Please see the following charts which have been specially prepared to help you.

The most important aspect of TENS electrode placement is to position them so that the current passes through the painful area, or along the nerves leading from the pain.

### How to use the electrode placement charts

Check the index on the opposite page for the chart most applicable to the pain problem. We have selected the easiest and most frequently used electrode placement positions and settings. **Note: These are suggested settings. There are alternative settings and all settings should be instructed by a medical practitioner.**

Low Back Pain  
Hip Neuralgia  
Phantom Limb, lower extremity  
Sciatica  
Bicipital Tendonitis  
Temporal Mandibular Joint Pain (TMJ)  
Shoulder Pain  
Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy  
Trigeminal Neuralgia  
Cervical Pain  
Chronic Cervical Strain  
Chronic Cervical Spine Pain (Postlaminectomy)  
Cervical Osteoarthritis  
Unilateral Cervical Spine Pain  
Mastectomy – Right side  
Degenerative Arthritis: Cervical and Lumbar  
Lateral Rib Cage Pain  
Chronic Hip Pain  
Herpes Zoster Neuralgia  
Acute Muscle and Ligament Tear – Ankle  
Post Podiatric Surgery (involving lateral toes)  
Knee Pain (Post-op)  
Degenerative Arthritis – Knee Pain  
Recurrent Patellar Subluxation  
Low Extremity Pain (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy)  
Lower Leg Pain (Diabetic Neuropathy)  
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome  
Wrist Pain  
Elbow & Forearm Pain  
Upper Extremity Pain (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy)  
Ulnar Nerve Lesion  
Atypical Facial Pain

# LOW BACK PAIN

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

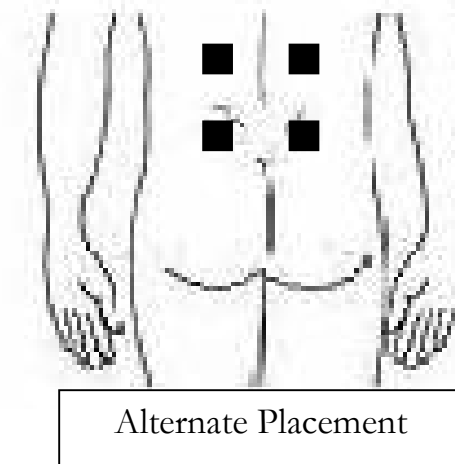
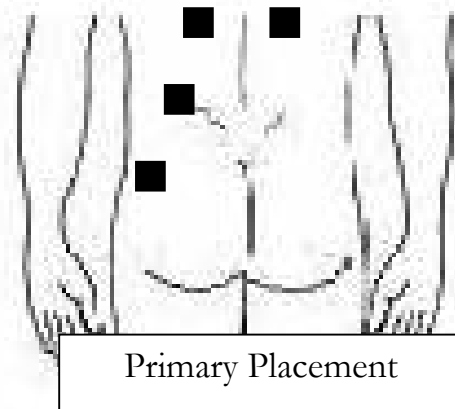
**PULSE RATE:** 50-80Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity that the muscles feel.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.





# HIP NEURALGIA

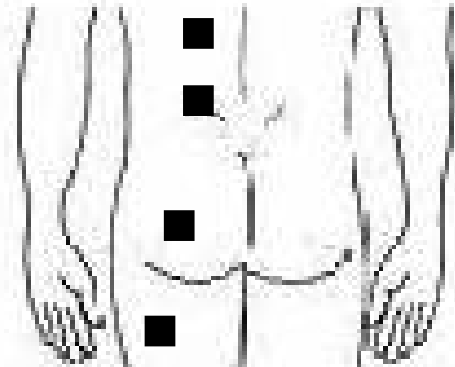
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

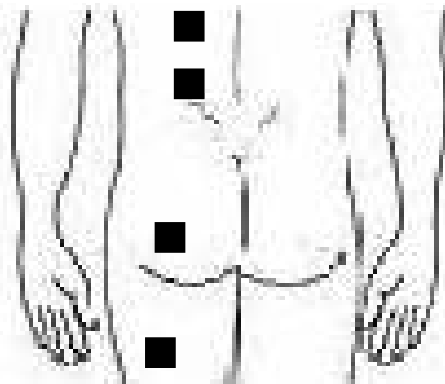
**PULSE WIDTH:** 150-260

**PULSE RATE:** 80-120Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 4 days.

4 hours per day thereafter.

# PHANTOM LIMB, LOWER EXTREMITY

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode or M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 160 - 200

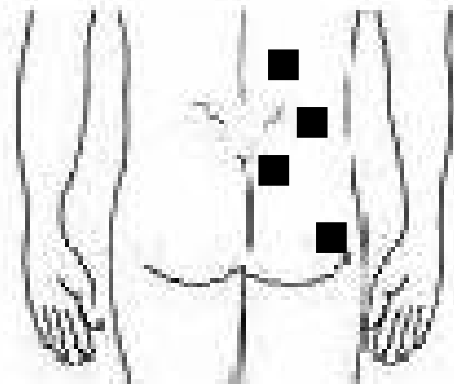
**PULSE RATE:** 50 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

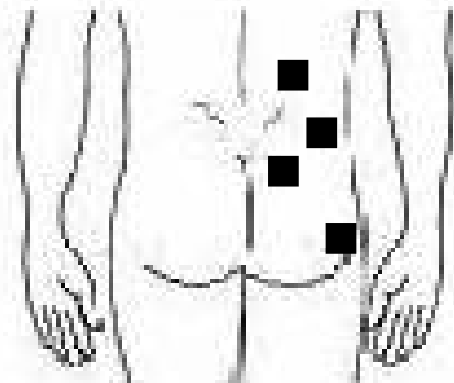
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours everyday for a week is available.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# SCIATICA

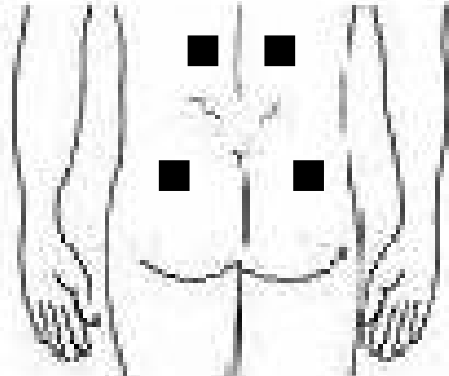
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

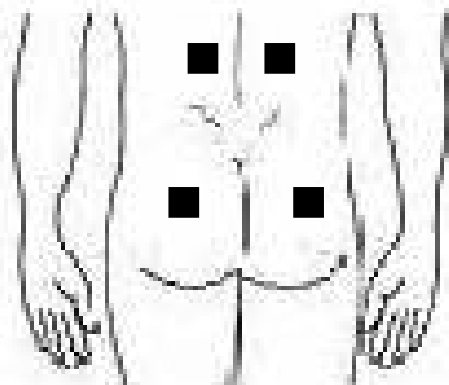
**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

**PULSE RATE:** 150Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# BICIPITAL TENDONITIS

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 150 - 160

**PULSE RATE:** 50Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# TEMPORAL MANDIBULAR JOINT PAIN (TMJ)

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 220

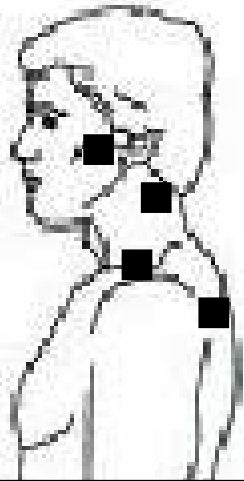
**PULSE RATE:** 10Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 2 days.

6 hours daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# SHOULDER PAIN

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

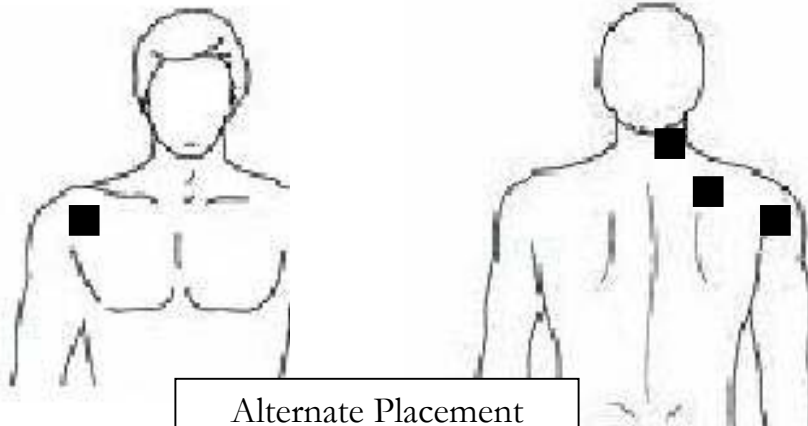
**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

**PULSE RATE:** 80 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

## Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

20-30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 150

**PULSE RATE:** 80 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

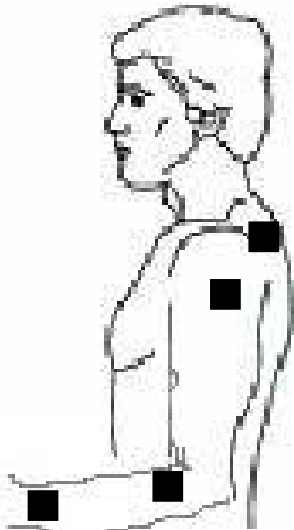
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 4 days.

4-6 hours daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# TRIGEMINAL NEURALGIA

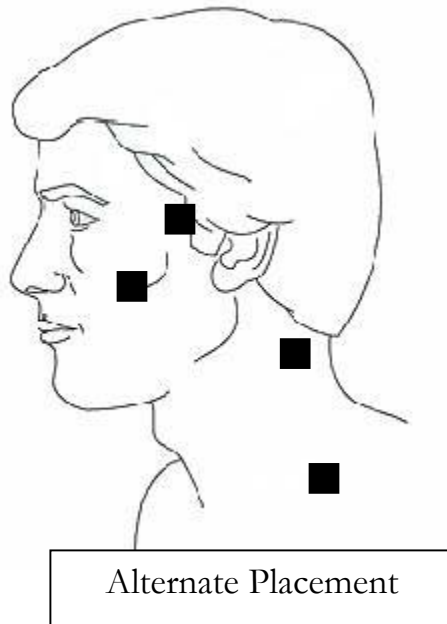
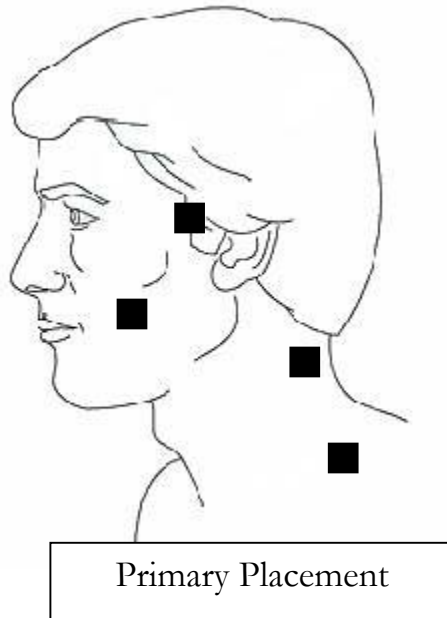
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 70

**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

20 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



# CERVICAL PAIN

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 150

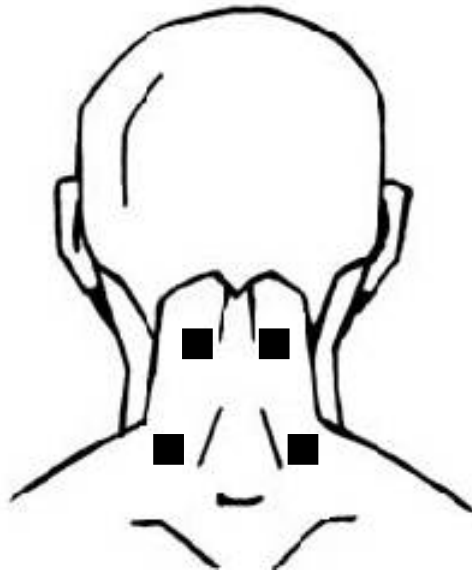
**PULSE RATE:** 60 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

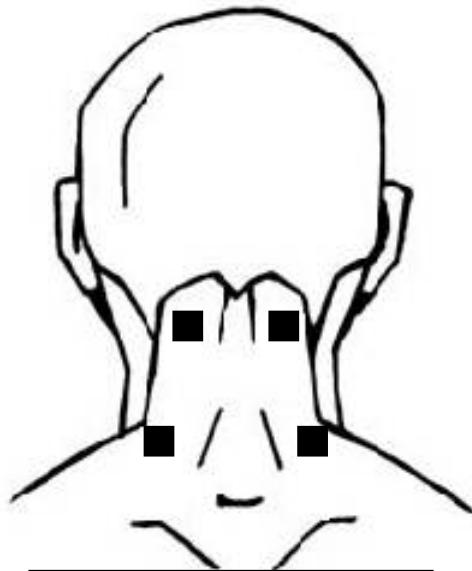
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# CHRONIC CERVICAL STRAIN

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 160

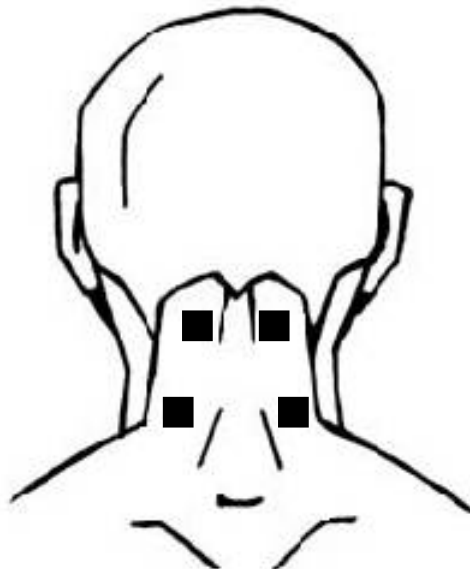
**PULSE RATE:** 30Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

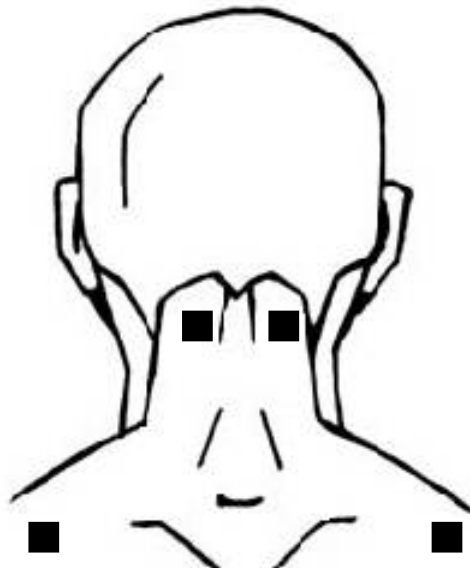
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 4 days.

4-5 hours daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# CHRONIC CERVICAL SPINE PAIN (Postlaminectomy)

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 200

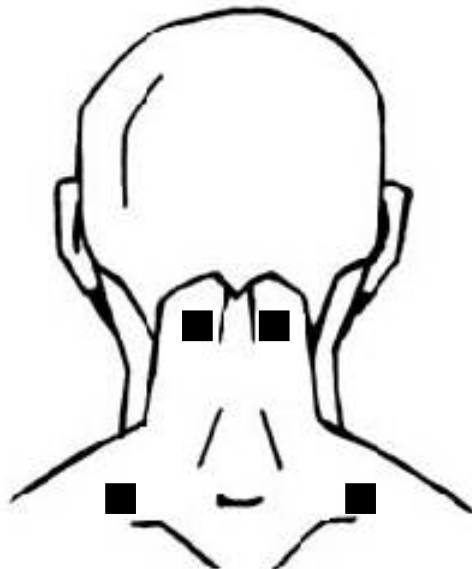
**PULSE RATE:** 10Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

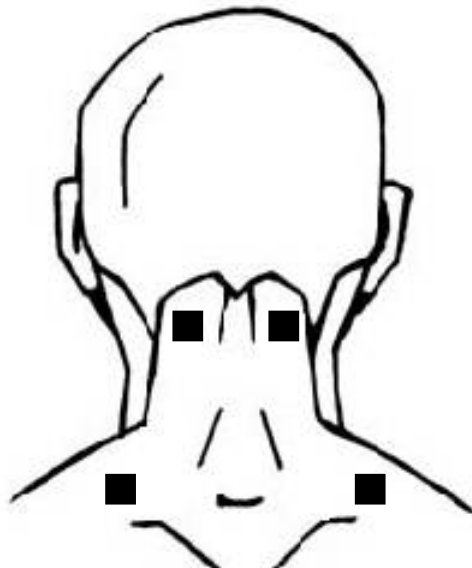
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 4 days.

4-5 hours daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# CERVICAL OSTEOARTHRITIS

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 150

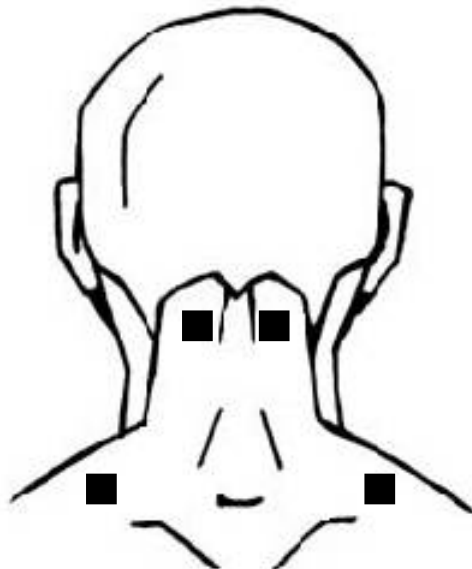
**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

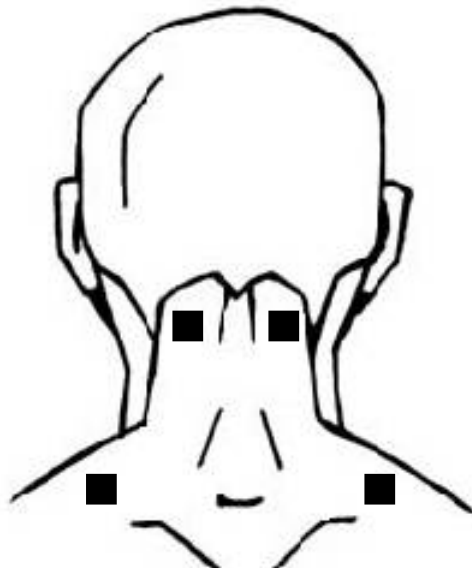
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

20-30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# UNILATERAL CERVICAL SPINE PAIN

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100

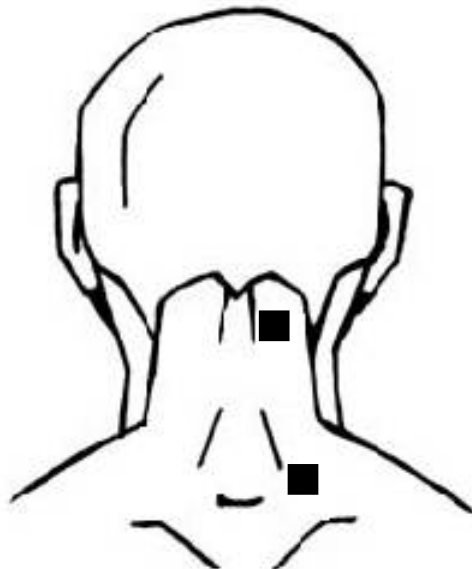
**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

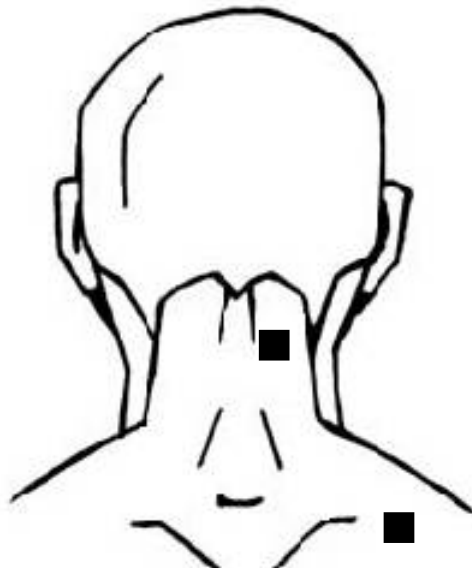
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# MASECTOMY – RIGHT SIDE

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

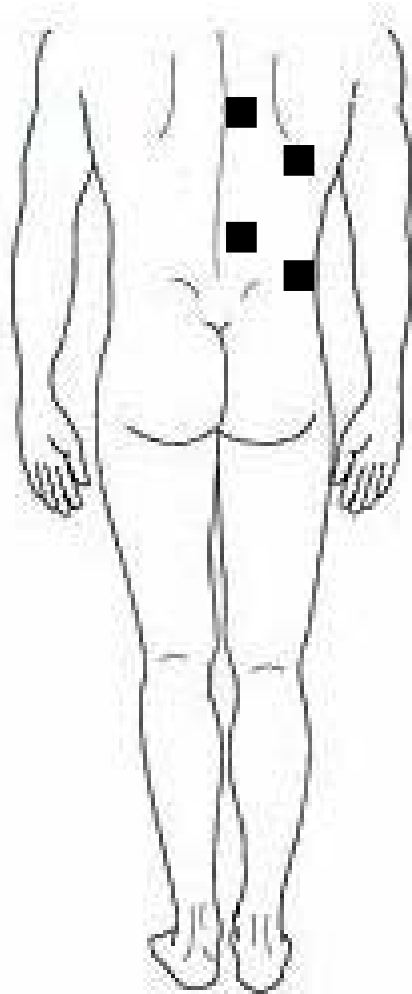
**PULSE RATE:** 120Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

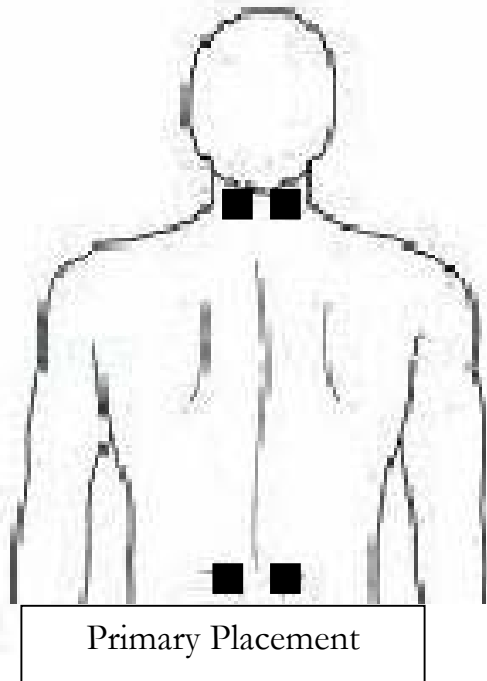
24 hours is available until initial relief.

15 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement

# DEGENERATIVE ARTHRITIS: CERVICAL AND LUMBAR



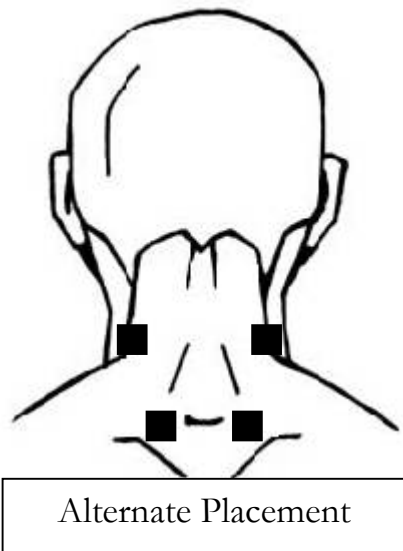
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100

**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# LATERAL RIB CAGE PAIN

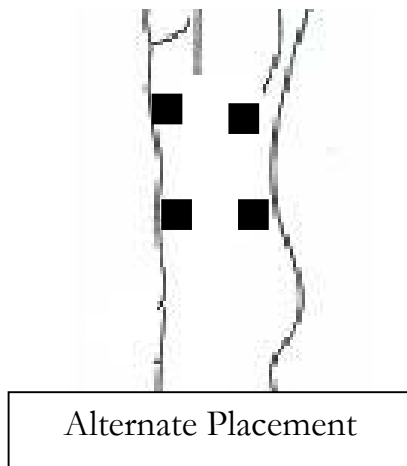
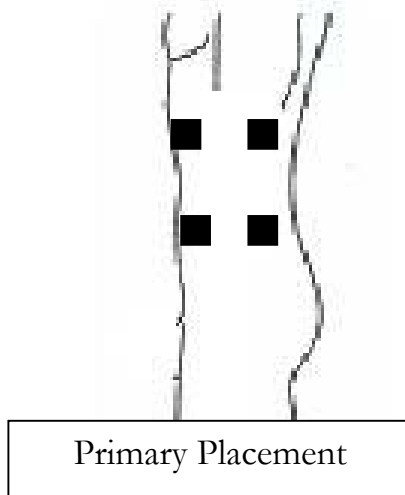
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 150

**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



# CHRONIC HIP PAIN

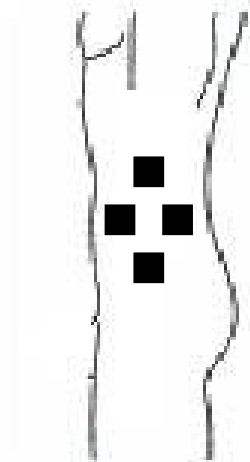
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 200

**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



Primary Placement

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# HERPES ZOSTER NEURALGIA

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 150

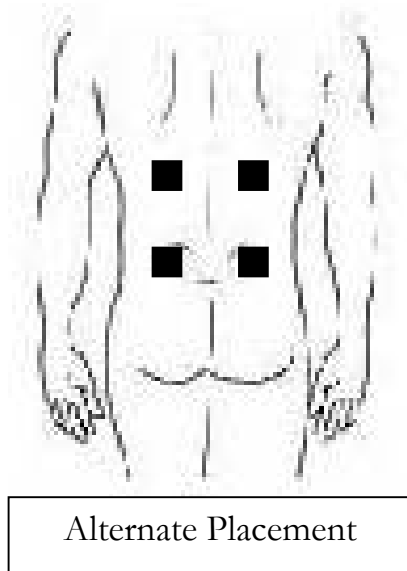
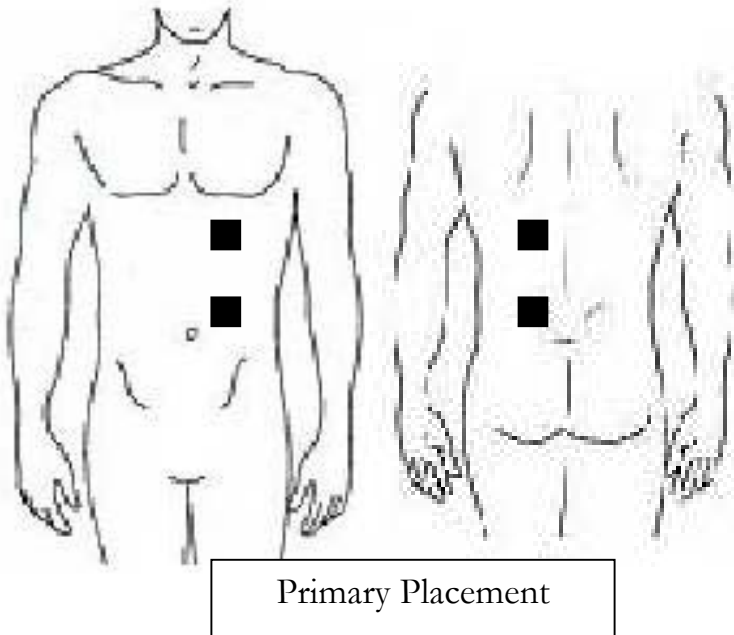
**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



# ACUTE MUSCLE AND LIGAMENT TEAR - ANKLE

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100

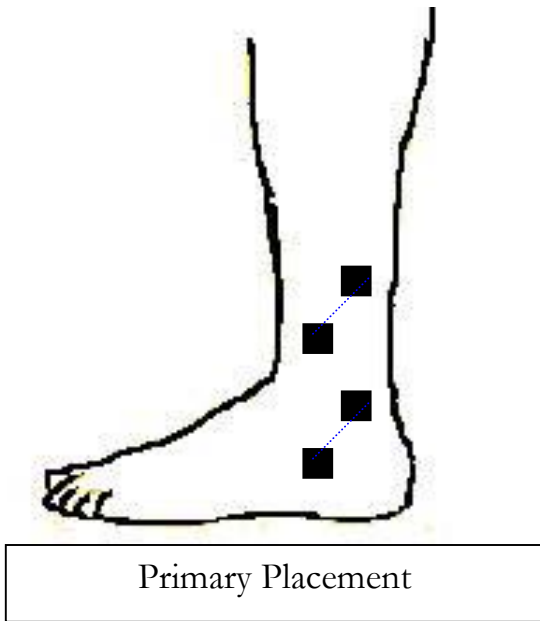
**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Place one set of electrodes on medial side and one set on lateral side

# POST-PODIATRIC SURGERY (involving lateral toes)

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 150

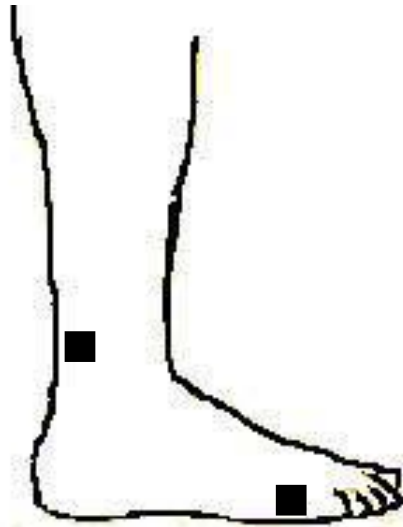
**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

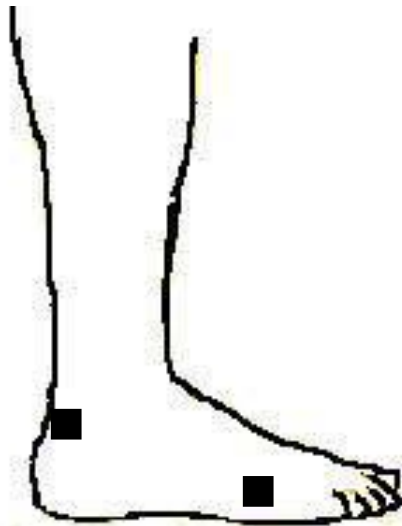
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 4 days.

4 hours daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# KNEE PAIN – POST-OP

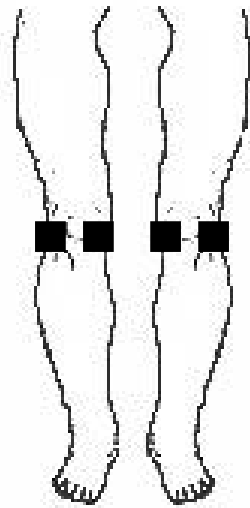
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

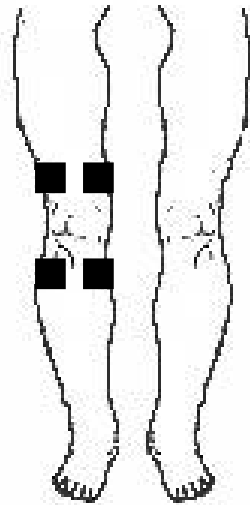
**PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 150

**PULSE RATE:** 120Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



Primary Placement



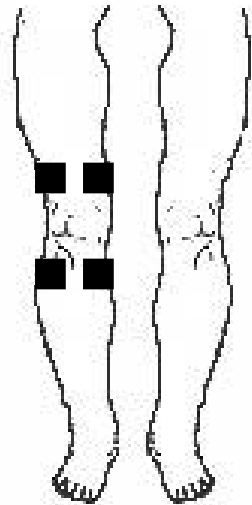
Alternate Placement

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# DEGENERATIVE ARTHRITIS - KNEE PAIN



Primary Placement

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 220

**PULSE RATE:** 80Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# RECURRENT PATELLAR SUBLAXATION

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 220

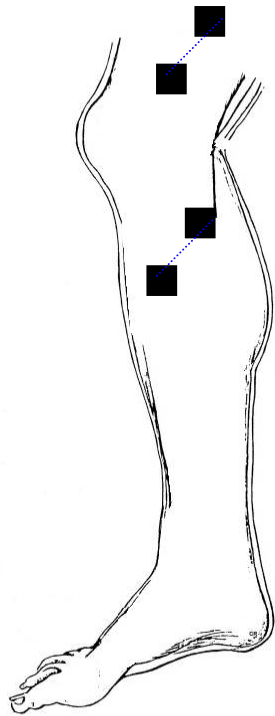
**PULSE RATE:** 80Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available for the first 4 days.

4 hours daily thereafter.



Primary Placement

Place one set of electrodes on medial side and  
one set on lateral side

# LOW EXTREMITY PAIN (REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY)

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode or M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 160

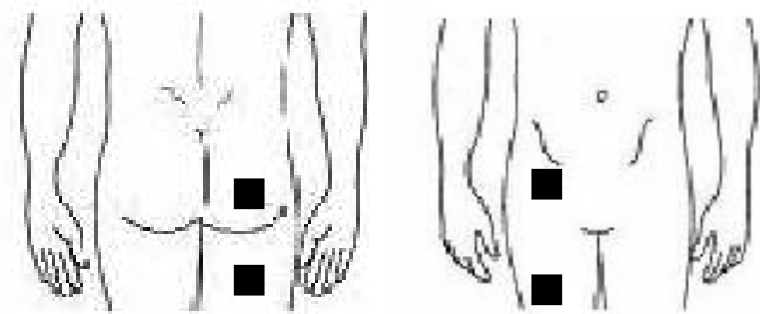
**PULSE RATE:** 30 - 80Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

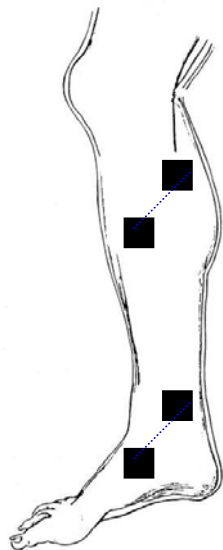
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement  
Place one set on each side of leg.



# LOWER LEG PAIN (DIABETIC NEUROPATHY)

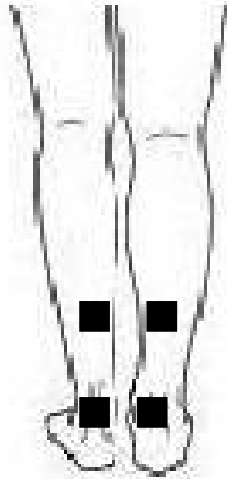
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

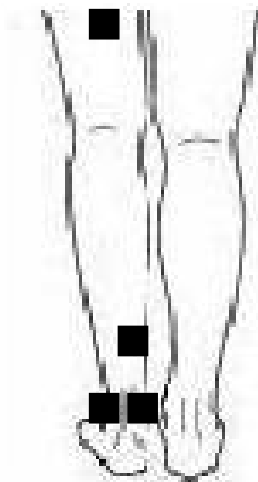
**PULSE WIDTH:** 100 - 160

**PULSE RATE:** 60 - 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



Primary Placement



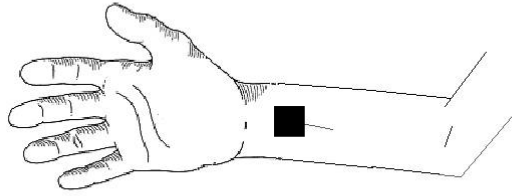
Alternate Placement

## ➤ Treatment Session

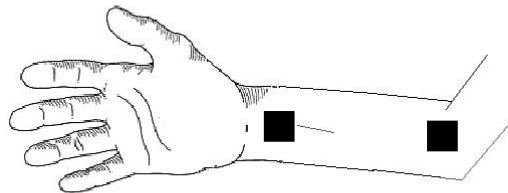
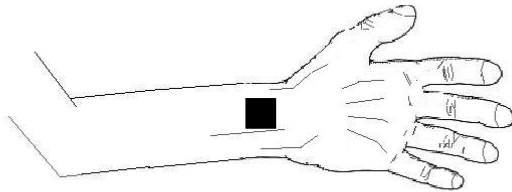
24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

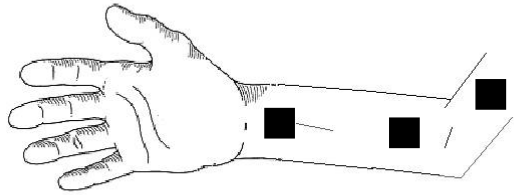
**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

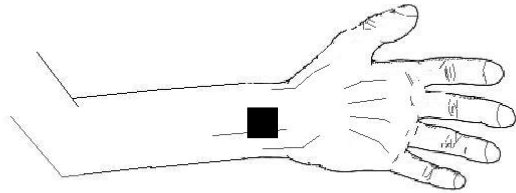
24 hours is available until initial relief.

20 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# WRIST PAIN



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

**PULSE RATE:** 30 - 50Hz

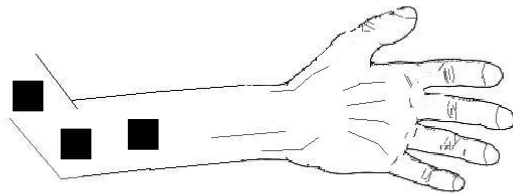
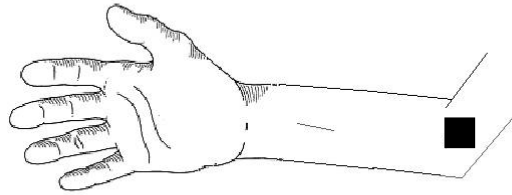
**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# ELBOW & FOREARM PAIN



Primary Placement

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100

**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.

# UPPER EXTREMITY PAIN (REFLEX SYMPATHETIC DYSTROPHY)

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode or M Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 220

**PULSE RATE:** 30 - 50Hz

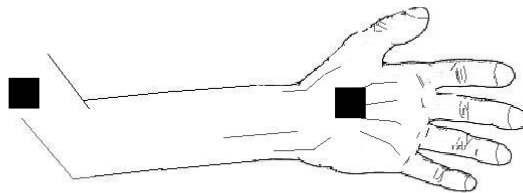
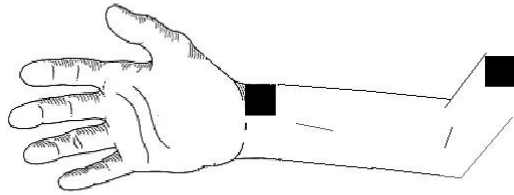
**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

**SUGGESTION:** Initial treatment begins with a low pulse width. Look for reduction in swelling and temperature.

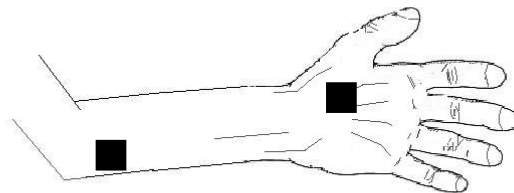
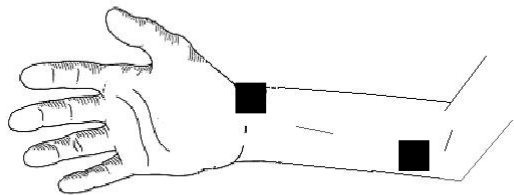
## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

# ULNAR NERVE LESION

## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** C Mode

**PULSE WIDTH:** 100

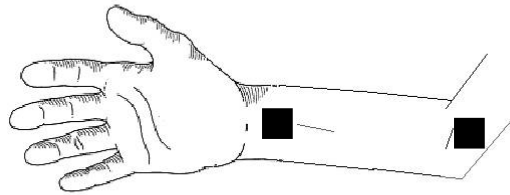
**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.



Primary Placement

# ATYPICAL FACIAL PAIN

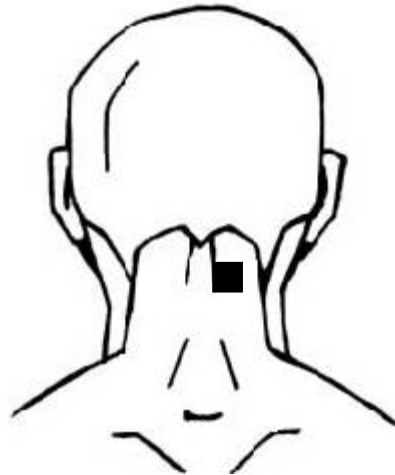
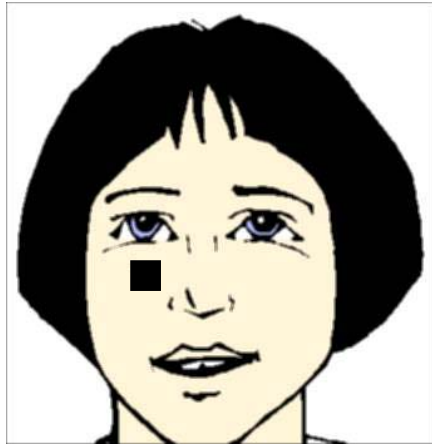
## ➤ Setting

**MODE:** M Mode

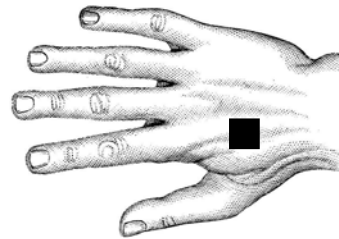
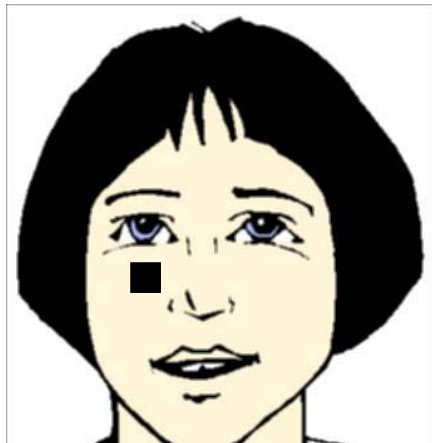
**PULSE WIDTH:** 260

**PULSE RATE:** 100Hz

**OUTPUT:** Adjust to the most comfortable intensity level.



Primary Placement



Alternate Placement

## ➤ Treatment Session

24 hours is available until initial relief.

30 minutes, 3 times daily thereafter.