

An introduction to

Intraoperative neuromonitoring

Protecting you during surgery

This booklet provides general information on intraoperative neuromonitoring (IONM). It is not meant to replace any personal conversations that you might wish to have with your physician or other member of your healthcare team. Not all the information here will apply to your individual treatment or its outcome.



Supporting your peace of mind

Your surgeon may choose to utilize a service known as IONM to help monitor your condition during your procedure, which may decrease the chance of nerve damage during surgery.

What is IONM?

Surgical procedures can involve surgeons operating close to delicate nerves which inherently places those nerves at risk. IONM helps a surgeon evaluate the condition of the patient's nervous system during surgery. If your surgeon elects to use IONM, then a neurophysiologist technologist and, if applicable, monitoring physician may be engaged to focus on your nervous system during the procedure. Having neurophysiologists in surgery facilitates effective communication among caregivers, helping improve recognition and response to changes in your condition.



What to expect during surgery

Preparation for surgery includes having discussions with your surgeon and asking any questions you may have. Prior to surgery, your surgeon will review your condition and may discuss any health problems, medications that you are taking and/or allergies.

On the day of your surgery, you may be taken to a preoperative room and prepared for surgery. This may include instructions about the surgery, anesthesia and postoperative period. At this time, you will be prepared for IONM if the surgeon chooses to implement this as a part of your surgery.

Once you have been given anesthesia, the neurophysiologist may apply a series of sterilized subdermal (beneath the skin) electrodes and surface adhesive pad electrodes to various parts of your body. These electrodes transmit signals from your nervous system to a special computer that is being controlled by your neurophysiologist. The data captured by these electrodes is communicated by your neurophysiologist to your surgeon and monitoring physician (if applicable) in real time during surgery.

It is important that you discuss the potential risks, complications and benefits of IONM with your surgeon prior to receiving treatment.

For further information about IONM services, risk considerations, and billing and insurance information, visit us at **[nuvasive.com/NCS](https://www.nuvasive.com/NCS)**

IONM reimbursement and payment

If physician services are provided, those services will be billed separately to your insurance provider. Depending on your insurance, the monitoring physician may be out-of-network. If this happens and you would like our help asking your insurance provider to re-process the claim on an in-network basis, call **888.464.2466** (option 2).

After the claim is processed, your insurer will issue an explanation of benefits (EOB) outlining the charges for the monitoring services you received. The EOB is **not** a bill from NCS and it does not mean you are being “balance billed.” It explains how the insurance claim was processed and the amount of any coinsurance or deductible you may be responsible for based on your plan benefits. After NCS receives the EOB, we will send you a statement for the amount you owe, based on the applicable co-pay or deductible.

During the claims processing, NCS may ask that you provide additional information about your insurance coverage or ask that you sign and return an assignment of benefits (AOB) authorizing payment of insurance benefits to NCS and allowing NCS to appeal on your behalf. The AOB allows NCS to engage with your insurer on your behalf in order to get the claim paid correctly.

For billing questions, please call **888.464.2466**. Physician bills may come from one of three practice groups: American Neuromonitoring Associates, P.C., Midwest Neuromonitoring Associates, PLLC or Pacific Neuromonitoring Associates, Inc.

Network participation

Our physicians have limited in-network participation. They are Medicare participating providers and participate with some Blue Cross, Medicaid and other commercial payer networks. You can view a full list of monitoring physicians at nuvasive.com/Neurologists and the plans in which they participate. Depending on your insurance plan, this means that you may receive IONM services from an out-of-network provider. You should check with your insurer to find out what this means for you.

Patient billing frequently asked questions

What should I do when I receive an EOB from my insurance company?

No immediate action is needed. Please note that an EOB from the insurance company is not a bill from NCS. You will receive a separate bill from NCS for the amount of a co-pay, co-insurance or deductible that is identified by your insurance payer as your responsibility.

My claim was processed out-of-network—can NCS help to appeal?

If the EOB and the bill you receive from NCS show that your claim was processed on an out-of-network basis, NCS can assist. Please call **888.464.2466** and request that NCS send an out-of-network appeal to the insurance carrier. You can also ask your insurer to reprocess the claim. Some states require insurance plans to process claims in certain ways to limit the amount you owe if you receive care at an in-network hospital but are unknowingly treated by an out-of-network provider. NCS cannot bill you for the amount you would owe on an in-network basis unless your insurer tells us what that amount is. NCS will send you another bill when the outcome of the appeal is known.

What should I do if I receive a check from the insurance company?

Although we will follow up with your insurer about the status, claims information is often sent directly to the insurance plan member (**note: this often happens with Blue Cross accounts**). Please forward any payment or correspondence you receive to our office as soon as possible. This will help us to update your account and apply payments properly. If the check is sent directly to you, please forward the check (or write a new check after depositing the insurance payment) and a copy of the EOB to the NCS office at **10275 Little Patuxent Parkway, #300, Columbia, MD 21044**. To endorse the check, sign on the back and write the name of the physician group that shows on the EOB below your signature. Please call **888.464.2466** with any questions.

What do I do if I have concerns about my ability to pay my bill?

Please call **833.529.6665** and request information about our financial hardship policy and monthly payment plans. NCS does make reasonable efforts to collect all amounts owed but does not refer overdue patient accounts to a collection agency.

Resources

For more information about IONM, please visit **nuvasive.com/NCS**

If you would like to learn more about patient support and education for chronic back, leg, and neck pain sufferers and their loved ones, please visit **thebetterwayback.org**

If you have any questions about IONM or your surgery, please call or visit your physician, who is the only one qualified to diagnose and treat your condition. This patient information brochure is not a replacement for professional medical advice.



Recovery from something as significant as spine surgery doesn't just happen—it's achieved.

The Better Way Back® is a free patient education and support program for those suffering from a spinal condition. We provide patients a safe space for compassionate discussion on all things spine, because we understand that a prepared, educated and supported patient has a greater chance of a successful recovery.

The Better Way Back champions that journey back to health by fostering a community exclusively for patients, by patients. We connect patients with others who have experienced similar challenges and recovered from spine surgery. Our recovered patients volunteer their time to share the modern, evolving story of life after back surgery. You don't have to face this journey alone. Join our nationwide community today!



Visit
tbwb.org/join



Call
[1.800.745.7099](tel:1.800.745.7099)



Text "TBWB" to
[858.360.8292](tel:858.360.8292)

thebetterwayback.org

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Intraoperative neuromonitoring



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