Talking to a Neurologist about DBS

BE PREPARED. BELOW ARE SOME DISCUSSION TOPICS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION TO HELP GUIDE THE CONVERSATION:

1. KNOW WHEN DBS CAN HELP
If medications are no longer providing as much relief from your symptoms, or are resulting in undesirable side effects, it may be time to consider DBS.

2. KNOW HOW A DBS SYSTEM WORKS
Electrical impulses stimulate a specific area in the brain affecting movement by altering brain activity in that area. Stimulation can be changed or stopped at any time.

3. KNOW WHAT’S INVOLVED IN A DBS PROCEDURE
Surgery is required to implant a DBS system. A small hole is drilled in the skull and tiny wire electrodes are placed in the brain. These are connected to a small battery-powered device called an implantable pulse generator (IPG), similar to a pacemaker, which is implanted in the chest.

4. KNOW WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A DBS SYSTEM IS IMPLANTED
The neurologist will fine tune the DBS therapy to manage your symptoms. DBS therapy can be adjusted or turned off at any time based on what’s right for you. Be sure to ask your neurologist about DBS system programming and ongoing therapy management.

5. KNOW THE RISKS
Any surgical procedure involves risks.* Ask your neurologist to explain the risks of DBS surgery.

6. KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT
It can take time to decide if DBS therapy is right for you. If you and your care team decide that you are a good candidate for DBS, you’ll be scheduled for surgery. Be sure to discuss any questions and concerns with your doctor.

If you are seeking information on managing symptoms of Parkinson’s disease (PD) or essential tremor (ET), make an appointment with a neurologist that specializes in movement disorders to discuss symptoms and review therapy options. Discussing the benefits of Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) can be a part of the conversation.
BRING A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER

Talk with your family, friends and others in your life. Consider bringing a friend or family member to your doctor appointments to take notes and help you process information.

ASK ABOUT DBS THERAPY

As with any surgery or therapy, deep brain stimulation has risks and complications. Most side effects of deep brain stimulation surgery are temporary and are resolved within the first few months. However, some complications can be more serious or permanent. Some people may experience lasting, stroke-like symptoms, such as weakness, numbness, problems with vision or slurred speech. In the event that side effects are intolerable or you are not satisfied with the therapy, the DBS system can be turned off or surgically removed.

Risks of brain surgery may include serious complications such as coma, bleeding inside the brain, paralysis, seizure and infection. Some of these may be fatal.

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Brief Summary: Prior to using these devices, please review the User’s Guide for a complete listing of indications, contraindications, warnings, precautions, potential adverse events, and directions for use.

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