

# TENS

Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation

## What is TENS?



TENS stands for Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation. TENS produces electrical signals to stimulate nerves via self adhesive pads. This releases endorphins, and disrupts the pain signal to the brain effectively reducing the pain sensation.

## How will TENS Help Your Childbirth Pain?



TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) works by passing mild electrical impulses through the skin, via electrode pads, into the nerve fibres which lie below. The TENS impulses help your body produce its own pain killing chemicals, such as endorphins.

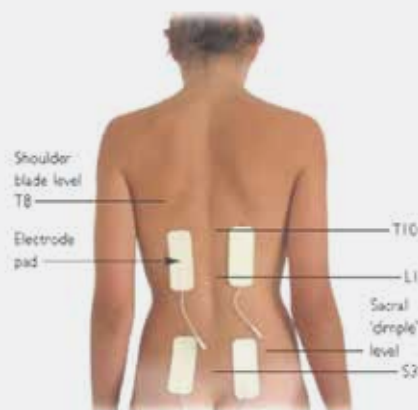
The level of pain relief obtained varies from person to person.

Our TENS all feature a boost button for you to press with your thumb when you want maximum output from the machine. This may help you to get through each contraction.

## INSTRUCTIONS AND FAQ

### Upper Electrodes

The placement of the electrodes corresponds to the locations where the nerves from the womb and the birth canal join the spinal cord.



Draw a horizontal line across the sharp angle at the base of the shoulder blades.

The top of the upper electrodes should be placed approximately three finger widths down from this.

## INSTRUCTIONS AND FAQ

### Lower Electrodes

Place the centre of the lower electrodes at the S3 level which is just below the 'dimple' at the top of the buttocks.

### When should I start using my TENS?

Use as early as you can after the onset of labour to allow time for your body's endorphins to rise.

### Can I use it before going into labour?

Yes, you can use the machine beforehand for pain relief. It is particularly good for the early stages of labour when you are at home with no other pain relief available. The machine can also be used from 37 weeks of pregnancy for back pain and then for general pain relief following labour.

### Can I combine TENS with other pain relief methods for childbirth?

Yes, you can still use heat packs, massage, gas or pethidine. You cannot use TENS if you are in the shower or bath

## PRECAUTIONS

- Do not use within the first 36 weeks of pregnancy except on the advice of your Health Care Provider.
- Do not place electrodes on abdomen during pregnancy.
- TENS units should not be used by people with pacemakers or suffer from epilepsy.
- Do not place the electrodes on the neck, head, over the heart, on the side of the body or unbroken or inflamed skin.
- TENS equipment should not be used when bathing or operating vehicles or potentially hazardous equipment.
- Electronic Fetal Monitoring Equipment can be affected by TENS use.
- Always keep TENS equipment out of reach of children.
- Care should be taken that the unit is not dropped, ideally it should be held or clipped to your clothing.
- Always keep your hired TENS dry and away from body fluids.
- Keep the TENS away from sources of magnetic fields for example, TV's microwave ovens as these may affect the LCD screen.