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Non-Surgical Treatment Helps Patients Suffering From Overactive Bladders

By Bill Ligas

When treating patients who suffer from an overactive bladder, Shameem Abbasy, M.D., M.P.H., Chief of Urogynecology, has the expertise to offer a wide range of treatment options. One such option is percutaneous tibial nerve stimulation (PTNS), which was recently added to the list of Medicare-approved procedures. "The treatment options we have target different areas," said Dr. Abbasy. "Percutaneous tibial nerve stimulation helps the communication between the bladder and the spine."

The treatment involves using a thin, acupuncture-like needle to stimulate the tibial nerve in the patient's ankle. The procedure begins with weekly 30 minute sessions for the first three months followed by monthly maintenance treatments. "Some people notice improvement within six weeks," Dr. Abbasy said. "But by twelve weeks you should

know if it's successful or not." Due to the size of the needle used, it's less invasive than some procedures such as Botox and has a response rate of 71% according to UrgentPC.

While there are a number of causes of urinary leakage, Dr. Abbasy feels that patients do not need to accept it as a life-altering condition and should seek medical therapy. "I think the stigma regarding urinary conditions has lessened," she said. "It's not just a normal part of aging." With the variety of treatment options available, including percutaneous tibial nerve stimulation, patients can work to eliminate or reduce episodes of incontinence.