

**No, you should not feel pain from the probe itself inside your brain.<sup>1</sup>**

The brain tissue where the Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) lead sits does not have pain receptors, so it cannot "feel" the probe.<sup>2</sup> However, it is normal to feel sensations around the device hardware (under the skin) or during the healing process.<sup>3</sup>

Here is a breakdown of what is normal versus what requires medical attention.

## **1. What You Might Feel (Normal)**

While the probe inside the brain is painless, you may experience other sensations related to the system:<sup>4</sup>

- **Tingling (Paresthesia):** When the device is turned on or adjusted, you might feel a brief tingling, "pins and needles," or a vibration in your arm or leg.<sup>5</sup> This is usually temporary and often stops once the settings are fine-tuned.<sup>6</sup>
- **Tightness or Pulling:** You might feel a pulling sensation in your neck or behind your ear where the extension wire runs under your skin. This is sometimes called "bowstringing" and can happen if scar tissue forms around the wire.<sup>7</sup>
- **Incision Tenderness:** If your surgery was recent, the spots where they cut the skin (on top of the head or near the collarbone) will be sore and tender as they heal.<sup>8</sup>
- **The "Bump":** You will likely be able to feel the hardware (the cap on your skull or the battery in your chest) if you touch the skin over it, but it should not be painful to the touch once healed.

## **2. What You Should NOT Feel (Warning Signs)**

If you are experiencing actual pain, it may indicate a complication. You should contact your neurosurgeon or neurologist if you feel:

- **Persistent Headache:** A severe or worsening headache that does not go away with standard pain relief.
- **Pain at the Implant Site:** Redness, swelling, warmth, or sharp pain around the battery (chest), the wire (neck), or the incision (head).<sup>9</sup> This could be a sign of infection.
- **Sharp Pain with Movement:** If moving your neck causes sharp pain along the wire, the hardware might be too tight or eroding through the skin (rare).
- **Painful Stimulation:** The electrical stimulation itself should not hurt. If you feel painful

muscle contractions or shocks, your device settings likely need to be adjusted.

## Summary

- **In the Brain:** No pain (the brain cannot feel it).<sup>10</sup>
- **On the Skin/Skull:** Soreness is normal during healing; sharp pain is not.
- **From Stimulation:** Tingling is common; pain means settings need adjustment.

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**Next Step:** Are you currently experiencing pain, or are you asking because you are preparing for the surgery?