



PATIENT
EDUCATION

Neuromodulation: Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation

patienteducation@aub.edu.lb

www.aubmc.org



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY of BEIRUT MEDICAL CENTER
المركز الطبي في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت

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What is Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)?

- Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) Therapy is a new brain stimulation treatment. It is used for persons who have psychiatric and neurological conditions and who have not benefitted from standardized treatment.
- TMS is approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for treating depression. It has also been helpful in the treatment of other conditions.
- TMS Therapy does not require any surgery.
- Unlike electroconvulsive therapy, it does not involve any anesthesia or sedation. It is done while you are awake and alert.
- Unlike medications, it does not circulate in your blood.

How does TMS work?

- A magnetic coil is placed on the left or right side of your head.
- The device sends the needed amount of electromagnetic energy to activate your brain cells.
- TMS does not affect the whole brain. It focuses specifically on regions in the brain associated with your psychiatric or neurologic symptoms.



How do I receive TMS?

- TMS is an outpatient procedure, done in your doctor's office.
- Each treatment session lasts approximately 40 minutes.
- You will need at least 5 treatments per week for at least 4 to 6 weeks (average of 20-30 treatments).

TMS Therapy for Depression

- TMS Therapy is an effective treatment for **Major Depressive Disorder**. However, it may not be effective for all persons who have depression.
- If you are receiving TMS therapy, you may also experience improvement in your **sleep, pain, energy, and anxiety symptoms**.
- You should immediately report to your doctor in case of any signs or symptoms of worsening depression, such as wishes of dying. You can ask a family member or caregiver to help you monitor and recognize these symptoms.

How can I benefit from TMS?

- Your depression will get better.
- You will not experience side effects due to medications, like weight gain, sexual problems, stomach problems, sleepiness, or dry mouth.
- TMS will not affect your memory or ability to concentrate.

What are the side effects of TMS?

- You will experience mild to moderate scalp pain during the treatment session. You will feel this pain less frequently after the first week of treatment.
- TMS produces a loud clicking disturbing sound. You should wear earplugs or hearing protection devices to avoid this discomfort.
- Seizures have been reported with TMS. You should inform your doctor if you ever had a seizure in the past.

What are the contraindications to TMS?

- TMS is strictly contraindicated in anyone who has metal in their head or in their upper body (within 30 cm of the scalp). This could result in serious injury or death.

Am I a CANDIDATE for TMS Therapy?

TMS therapy can be an alternative treatment for you if:

- You have tried several antidepressants and psychotherapy without any improvement
- You cannot tolerate the side effects of medications

Consult your doctor if you wish to know about ongoing research studies on TMS.

This educational material provides general information only. It does not constitute medical advice. Consult your health care provider to determine whether the information applies to you.