



Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) Therapy

Consumer Information Sheet

Description of the procedure

Repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) is a new technique for treating Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) by stimulating the brain noninvasively through the scalp and skull. In rTMS, a rapidly changing magnetic field passes through your scalp and skull and generates small electrical pulses in your brain.

Prior to receiving rTMS, you will be interviewed by the team's Consultant Psychiatrist, who will ask you about your psychiatric and medical history. This interview can take between 30-45 minutes. At the end of this appointment you will be told if you are suitable to receive rTMS Therapy.

rTMS is conducted in a specially equipped room whilst you sitting in a chair, fully conscious with your head resting at a set location. Small electrodes are put onto the scalp to monitor brain wave activity and an rTMS stimulus coil is positioned so as to just touch your head. Each rTMS treatment session should take about 20 minutes of actual stimulation five days per week, with a fortnightly review. Appointments are made at a time that is convenient to both you and the rTMS Therapy team.

You may withdraw your consent for this therapy at any time. In this event, if you choose not to participate, this decision will not affect your treatment now, or in the future. You may request the results of any treatment, consistent with Freedom of Information principles.

There are no guarantees that this treatment will be successful, and the treatment is not a long-term cure for the condition, so it may relapse in the future.

Risks of the procedure

In early rTMS research, several (7 documented) participants experienced seizures during a session. Since the implementation of parameter and recruitment guidelines (1996) there have been, to the best of our knowledge, no confirmed instances of seizures during rTMS. In addition we will monitor your brain wave activity during the session to provide early warning of possible seizure activity.

There have been some instances where recorders on your head get hot. This is usually due to poor application, and if you feel any discomfort, then we would be able to alleviate that if you let us know.

Some participants consider the clicking noise from rTMS uncomfortable.

Finally some participants develop a mild headache, believed to be due to scalp muscle tension. This can be easily relieved with common headache tablets.

For more information, please contact:

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This photo shows rTMS being administered.

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