

*Talk with your
psychiatrist or
nurse if you have
any questions.*

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation

Depression can greatly affect your life. Often, medications can help manage depression. However, this may not be enough for everyone. Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) is another treatment for depression. TMS works by stimulating the mood area of the brain. People with depression may receive TMS if they:

- Have not responded to at least 4 different antidepressant medications
- Do not tolerate medication side effects

It is safe and can be done while you are in the hospital or as an outpatient.

Before treatment

Your psychiatrist will explain the benefits of TMS and answer any questions you have. A psychiatrist who is an expert in TMS will then meet with you. They will decide if TMS is right for you.

TMS takes about 20 minutes per session. It is done 5 days a week for about 7 weeks. Depending on your health insurance, 35 or 36 treatments may be approved. Your healthcare team will show you the equipment so you know what to expect.

- There is nothing you need to do to prepare for this treatment.
- Be sure to tell your psychiatrist or care team if you have anything metallic in your head. Metal can interfere with this treatment.
- The psychiatrist will measure your head to identify the exact location to treat.

What to expect during treatment

- There will be no medications, injections or IV (into the vein) lines for this treatment.
- During TMS, you will sit in a comfortable chair. You can read, talk or listen to music.
- Your care team will place a magnetic coil on your scalp (Figure 1).
- You will wear ear plugs. The machine will make a loud tapping sound.
- The coil will send a small amount of energy to an exact place just inside your brain.
- If you have any discomfort, tell the care team. They can adjust the TMS settings.

Figure 1



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Side effects

- Headaches are common. You can treat them with pain medication.
- You may feel mild to moderate scalp discomfort under the coil. This gets better after the first week of treatment.
- Although unlikely, there is a very small risk of seizures.

For outpatient TMS, we do not give pain medications. If you feel discomfort during your treatment, you may take over-the-counter pain medications such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen or naproxen as directed by your physician. Take it 1 to 2 hours before coming to the treatment session.

When your treatment is finished, you can resume your usual activities.