



Treatment-Resistant Depression

Depression is highly treatable with therapy, medicine and lifestyle changes, but it may not always be easily treated. For many people, depression may continue despite intervention, and these people may have treatment-resistant depression (TRD). This happens when available treatments only partly relieve their symptoms or do not help at all. Neurostimulation therapies, such as transcranial magnet stimulation (TMS) and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), provide an alternative and are available through Augusta University Psychiatry and Behavioral Health.

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation

TMS is a non-invasive technique that stimulates the brain through the scalp, using magnetic energy. An insulated coil generates brief magnetic pulses, which pass easily and painlessly through the skull and into the brain. This allows the TMS therapist to focus this energy specifically on areas of the brain that play a role in the regulation of mood and, in turn, improve symptoms of major depression. The pulses generated are of the same type and strength as those generated by magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machines. When these pulses are administered in rapid succession, it is referred to as "repetitive TMS" or "rTMS," which has longer-lasting effects on brain activity.

A safe and well-tolerated procedure, rTMS can be an effective treat-

ment for patients with depression who have not benefitted from antidepressant medications or cannot tolerate antidepressant medications due to the associated side effects. A treatment course consists of daily sessions lasting approximately 30 minutes. Typically, gradual improvement occurs between four to six weeks of daily stimulation (20 to 30 sessions).

Electroconvulsive Therapy

ECT is a safe and effective treatment for a broad range of more severe symptoms of mental illness. Often this is the only treatment that can provide complete and rapid relief from an episode of severe depression, mania, catatonia and some cases of psychosis. ECT is administered two or three times weekly for six to 12 treatments. Our team of ECT providers includes psychiatrists, as well as anesthesiologists and perioperative nurses. For the convenience of our patients, we offer both inpatient and outpatient ECT at two area medical centers: Augusta University Medical Center in Augusta, Ga., and at Aiken Regional Medical Center in Aiken, S.C.



To refer your patient Phone: 706-721-6597 Fax: 706-721-1459

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An outpatient visit with one of our physicians will help to determine the right form of neurostimulation therapy. All patients need to be referred by a licensed clinician through the call center at Augusta University Health. These treatments are reserved for those who have not received benefit from antidepressant medications, so detailed records of prior treatments, including specific doses and durations of antidepressant medication, as well as the type, number of sessions and outcome of psychotherapy, are required for insurance authorizations.



Dr. Peter Rosenquist

- Vice chair of Augusta University Psychiatry and Health Behavior
- Director of the Therapeutic Neurostimulation Program
- Board-certified psychiatrist
- Participated as an investigator in numerous TMS and ECT clinical trials



Dr. Vaughn McCall

- Chair of Augusta University Psychiatry and Health Behavior
- Research interests include depression, electroconvulsive therapy, quality of life, insomnia and suicide.



Dr. Nagy Youssef

- Associate Professor, Augusta University Psychiatry and Health Behavior
- Board-certified psychiatrist
- Conducted research in treatment-resistant mood disorders, PTSD, and brain stimulation



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