

# How rTMS can help you break through depression



## What is Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS)?

rTMS therapy is an effective, safe and non-invasive treatment for depression sufferers which can be effective for patients who have not responded to treatment with anti-depressant medication or psychotherapy. rTMS uses highly focused magnetic pulses to stimulate parts of the brain that activate mood.

## How does rTMS therapy work?

TMS is a procedure that uses focused magnetic pulses to the part of the brain that regulates mood (dorsolateral prefrontal cortex). During rTMS, magnetic pulses pass through a treatment coil placed close to the patient's scalp. The coil generates magnetic pulses that safely stimulate nerve cells, which assist in relieving symptoms of depression and anxiety. Patients are awake and alert during treatment and can return to their normal activities immediately following treatment.

## Receiving rTMS at Langmore Centre

rTMS therapy is offered as an inpatient and outpatient service at Langmore Centre. An rTMS course typically consists of a daily treatment over a 3-4 week period or as determined by your treating psychiatrist.

## When will you see results?

The response rate of rTMS differs for each patient. If rTMS is successful, your depression should lift and resolve partly or completely. Symptom relief may occur after a few weeks of treatment and in some cases a delayed response is not uncommon. If your symptoms respond to rTMS, ongoing maintenance therapy should be discussed with your treating doctor. After completing your treatment course, you will need to continue with your standard treatment, which may include medications and psychotherapy.

## What does rTMS treatment involve?

Each rTMS treatment takes approximately 30-40 minutes and is administered and supervised by a trained rTMS nurse. During rTMS you are awake and alert and reclined in a chair. A coil is positioned in the front region of the head and the coil emits a magnetic pulse and produces a small clicking sound. Patients experience a tapping sensation on their head. Patients are offered earplugs if they experience any discomfort from the sound. Patients are free to watch television, read a book or listen to music throughout the session.

## What are the side-effects of rTMS?

rTMS therapy is considered a very safe procedure and is generally well tolerated.

The most common side effects associated with rTMS include:

- Headache
- Scalp discomfort at the site of stimulation
- Light headedness
- Fatigue
- In some cases, a rare risk of seizure



## Patient suitability

rTMS is not suitable for patients that:

- are currently pregnant
- have epilepsy

or are implanted with:

- cardiac pacemakers
- cochlear implants
- brain aneurysm clips or coils
- implanted metallic devices or shrapnel

These devices may interact and affect the magnetic field of the treatment device.

## Accessing services

Accessing rTMS therapy at St John of God Langmore Centre requires a referral from your current GP or psychiatrist.

Referrals must be addressed to an rTMS-certified psychiatrist.

Once you have been referred, you will be assessed to determine your eligibility for rTMS treatment.

Private health insurance is recommended for admission to inpatient and outpatient services.

TAC, WorkCover and DVA approved claims are accepted, and self-funding options are also available.

For all enquiries, please call (03) 9773 7000.

3 Gibb Street, Berwick 3806  
T. (03) 9773 7000 E. [info.langmore@sjog.org.au](mailto:info.langmore@sjog.org.au)

[www.sjog.org.au/langmorecentre](http://www.sjog.org.au/langmorecentre)

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