

Frequently asked questions

Are there any side effects?

Some patients have localised discomfort over the site of the magnetic stimulation due to the pulsing effect of the magnet. This usually settles with time or simple analgesia such as Panadol. Disposable earplugs are available for those concerned about the noise.

Are there immediate effects of TMS?

Some people feel tired after each treatment though this differs from person to person. Some people report an improvement in their night sleep during the course of treatment.

What do I need to bring to hospital?

- GP referral
- Medicare card
- All current medication
- Any current pathology results
- Comfortable clothing
- Music if desired

Please do not bring any valuables to hospital.



Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)

Information for patients, carers, family and support persons




**The Geelong
Clinic**
by Healthscope

98 Townsend Road,
St Albans Park VIC 3219

P 03 5240 0700 | **F** 03 5248 4852

thegeelongclinic.com.au

ABN 85 006 405 152



V6_10/2022

Community
of Care

 **The Geelong Clinic**
by Healthscope

What is Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation? (TMS)

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) is a treatment tool for depression and a number of other disorders. TMS involves the focused application of a magnetic field to superficial regions of the brain, changing the activity level of cells in the stimulated areas. During a TMS procedure, an electrical current passes through a small coil placed close to the scalp, this current induces a magnetic field.

The magnetic field is applied in pulses that can pass into an area of the brain using a pulsing magnet placed on the scalp. The magnet is designed to deliver a focused beam of magnetic energy to stimulate electrical activity in nerves below the coil, causing them to fire. This changes the brain's electrical activity and the chemicals involved in controlling mood.

TMS in Depression

Studies have been evaluating the role of TMS in depression for over 20 years. These studies have shown that TMS can relieve the symptoms of depression in a proportion of individuals suffering from this condition. It is possible that it acts by changing activity in areas of the brain that are abnormally active in patients with depression.

TMS treatment has progressively become more available in clinical practice. It has been available in Canada for a number of years and was licensed in the USA in 2008. More recently, TMS Treatment has been approved for use in Australia by the TGA (Therapeutic Goods Administration). TMS is also endorsed by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists.

Who can have TMS?

TMS is available to patients with depression and a history of poor response to, or an inability to tolerate the side effects of antidepressant medications. It is also available to patients who have had a previous positive response to TMS at this or other facilities.

As TMS involves magnetic energy, there are some people who are unable to have TMS.

Exclusions include:

- Cardiac pacemakers/ defibrillators
- Previous head/ brain surgery
- Cochlear implants
- Brain aneurysm clips
- Previous seizures, fits or epilepsy
- Pregnancy
- Neurostimulator/ biostimulator
- Significant neurological disorders such as brain tumours, Cerebral Lupus, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's Disease etc.)

People with dental filling or braces are able to receive TMS. A Safety Checklist will need to be completed and signed prior to commencing TMS.

TMS at The Geelong Clinic

You will be seated in a comfortable chair during treatment. There are no medications administered and you will be fully conscious and responsive. The TMS operator will rest the magnet over the appropriate area of the scalp and activate the magnet. During treatment, you may speak with the operator, rest or meditate, listen to music or watch TV.

You will need to remove metal hair clips and refrain from using any hair product. Hearing aids and glasses are also removed during treatment.

Each treatment session takes approximately 30 to 40 minutes. For the initial course of TMS patients usually have 20 sessions of TMS over two to four weeks. TMS treatment is generally very well tolerated and appears to be free of major side-effects.

We recommend patients should not drive after TMS treatment or return to work that day.

Fees, charges and health insurance

Your psychiatrist can advise you of the best options to access Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS).

Prior to commencing repeated Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) at The Geelong Clinic, all referrals undergo a review of funding options that may be available to them including private health funds, WorkCover Authority, DVA and TAC. Self-funding is also an option.

Patients and their families will be advised where possible of any out of pocket expenses.

Please call us on [03 5240 0741](tel:0352400741) to discuss any questions you may have in relation to cost.

Referral process

Your psychiatrist can discuss with you whether this is a suitable treatment option. From there, a referral can be made so you can be formally assessed.

If you do not have a psychiatrist, a referral from your GP requesting an initial consultation with one of our Psychiatrists should be your first step. In this instance, your referral can be addressed to "Dear Doctor".

To be assessed for suitability for TMS treatment, please fax your referral letter to [03 5240 0799](tel:0352400799).

For further information please contact the TMS Coordinator on [03 5240 0741](tel:0352400741).