

rTMS side effects and risk

Common side effects (less than 5-20%)

- 1) Headache
- 2) Fatigue
- 3) Dizziness
- 4) Discomfort at stimulation site (during treatment)
- 5) Insomnia

Serious side effect (less than 0.1% risk)

Seizure (during the application of the rTMS stimulation)

Who should avoid rTMS?

Presence of ferromagnetic (metallic) material anywhere in the head that is not fixed to bone, excluding the mouth. This includes but is not limited to cochlear implants, other implanted brain stimulators or electrodes, aneurysm clips, surgical plates or screws

History of seizure activity or epilepsy, particularly recent seizure

Cost

As this is an independent rTMS clinic and the treatment is not currently reimbursed by the provincial medical services plan, there is a fee for each TMS session. The details of the cost and method of payment can be discussed with you by phone or in person ahead of time. If you have extended health, you may wish to ask the insurer whether part or all of treatments will be covered.



Who to contact

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Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS)

BrainStim Healthcare

“Stimulated Minds,
Stimulating Lives”

What is rTMS?

rTMS is a form of neurostimulation and generally involves stimulating the brain. It has been approved for clinical use in Canada since 2002. At BrainStim Healthcare, rTMS treatment involves generating a magnetic field from an electrical device which leads to beneficial effects by placing the device's magnetic coil on a person's head over a brain region thought to be related to the development of certain mental or pain disorders. This region is then treated with a series of trains of magnetic pulses which produces electrical stimulation within the brain, but without triggering a seizure or causing any significant cognitive (memory) impairments.

How is rTMS done?

You sit in a comfortable chair and need to remain quite still during the treatment, which usually lasts around 30-40 minutes. You are fully conscious throughout and someone will be with you in the room at all times while the coil is applied and the device is in operation. Typically, a standard treatment course is administered 5 days a week over a 20-30 day period. Those successfully treated may decide to continue with maintenance treatments at less frequent intervals.

The treatments are under the overall supervision of your rTMS psychiatrist, who will oversee the treatments and measure your progress during the treatment course. You are likely to stay on the same medications that you are usually taking during the rTMS course. Your doctor will continue to oversee your overall mental and physical health care.

When should you consider rTMS?

- you have not responded well to standard medication-based treatments
- you have experienced intolerable side effects to standard treatment(s)
- you have a preference in minimizing exposure to medication, or more invasive treatments, and wanting to try an evidence-based, non-medication treatment first

What is required?

- being age sixteen years old or above
- able to understand the nature, risks, and benefits of rTMS and provide voluntary consent for treatment
- able to sit quite still in our comfortable leather treatment chair over a thirty to forty minute period during the procedure
- able to realistically commit to attending the five days per week for four to six weeks for a standard course of rTMS
- have a referring doctor

Who could benefit from rTMS at BrainStim Healthcare?

- 1) Major Depressive Disorder, including during pregnancy and in the post-partum period
- 2) Bipolar I or II Mood Disorder, current episode being depressed
- 3) Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
- 4) Pain-related conditions limited to:
 - a) Fibromyalgia
 - b) Neuropathic facial pain or trigeminal neuralgia
 - c) Neuropathic limb pain including Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS)
 - d) Migraine headaches
 - e) Post-concussion or post-traumatic headaches
 - f) Chronic myofascial pain syndromes including those from whiplash injuries

We will also consider a trial of rTMS in those with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or Systemic Exertion Intolerance Disease