

# Unilateral MRI-guided focused ultrasound thalamotomy for treatment-resistant essential tremor

Information for the public

Published: 20 June 2018

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

There is not much good evidence about how well this procedure works for treatment-resistant essential tremor, but there are no major safety concerns. The procedure only treats tremor on 1 side of the body, and how this affects ability to function and the quality of life of people with tremor on both sides is uncertain. This procedure can be used but only when patients have regular checks to see how well it is working or if it has caused problems. This is because of the concerns about its long-term effects and complications.

Essential tremor has no known cause but may get worse with time and treatments may not work. This procedure uses a special head frame that allows ultrasound to be applied to a specific area on 1 side of the brain (thalamus) with MRI guidance. The aim is to reduce the tremors on 1 side of the body.

[NHS Choices](#) may be a good place to find out more. NICE's information on [interventional procedures guidance](#) has more about what a procedure is and how we assess them.

## Is this procedure right for me?

If you've been offered this procedure, your healthcare professionals should discuss with you what is involved, and tell you about the risks and benefits. They should talk with you about your options, and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. All of this should happen before you agree (consent) to have the procedure. You should also be told how to find more information about the procedure.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

## Some questions to think about

- What does the procedure involve?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- What happens if the procedure doesn't work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I don't want the procedure? Are there other treatments available?

ISBN: 978-1-4731-8699-6