

Transcranial magnetic stimulation for obsessive-compulsive disorder

Information for the public
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This procedure can only be done as part of a research study. This is because there is not enough evidence to be sure how well it works or how safe it is.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder is a mental health condition in which a person has obsessive thoughts (repeated, unwanted and unpleasant thoughts, images or urges). The person feels the need to carry out compulsive (repetitive) behaviours to try to relieve the unpleasant feelings brought on by the obsessive thoughts. In this procedure, a device containing an electromagnet is placed against the scalp. The device produces pulses of electromagnetic energy that stimulate specific areas in the brain through the skull (transcranial). Treatment is a daily session of about 30 minutes, for a few weeks. The aim is to reduce the obsessive-compulsive thoughts and behaviours.

The [NHS website](#) may be a good place to find out more. NICE's information on [HealthTech 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 explain the research study, 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 and to be in the study. 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 does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure? Are there other treatments available?

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