New Treatment Involving Use Of Magnetic Pulses Effective Against Depression: Study

Description

> When simple approaches such as medication donâ??t work as a treatment for depression, other approaches are applied. One such approach or treatment is repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation or rTMS.

It is estimated that among at least 40% of people suffering from depression, antidepressant medication does not prove to be effective. And for such cases, a new approach called repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation or rTMS can help, a new study has said.

As part of the treatment, a device containing an electromagnetic coil is placed on the patientâ??s scalp during an rTMS session. The device delivers a magnetic pulse without causing any pain and stimulates nerve cells in areas of the brain which are responsible for mood changes. This area is called the Dorsolateral Prefrontal Cortex.

The findings of this study have been published in the American Journal of Psychiatry. While the process has been proven effective, we still donâ??t know how rTMS affects the brain and its mechanisms.

To answer this question, assistant professor of UBCâ??s Department of Psychiatry Dr Fidel Villa-Rodriguez and her team gave patients rTMS while they were in an MRI scanner so that their brains could be measured and detected in real-time.

The team found that stimulating that area using rTMS also activated several other areas of the brain. These areas were related to tasks ranging from managing emotional reactions to motley control. The team treated the patients for four weeks and investigated whether the areas of the brain that were activated were associated with a reduction in depressive symptoms in the patients.

Dr Villa Rodriguez said that the areas of the brain that were activated during rTMS had a significant association and yielded positive results. He said that it became easy to find out how rTMS stimulates different parts of the brain, and he continues to hope to understand how patients respond to the treatment.

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esalemedia