

TMS TRENDS

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CHALLENGES TO TREATING MAJOR DEPRESSION

Even though twenty years have passed since the first modern SSRI antidepressant became available, an unmet need still exists among depression sufferers. Upon seeking treatment for the first time, a patient diagnosed with major depression has a likelihood of achieving full clinical benefit, or remission, less than one third of the time. In fact, partial or non-response to first treatment intervention is a common outcome. Unfortunately, with each successive treatment failure, the likelihood of benefit declines. These factors highlight the need to provide safe and effective treatment as early as possible in treatment. Despite all of the treatment options available for depression, it is estimated that about 25% of patients will remain refractory to any treatment.

A task force report published in 2006 by the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology pointed out that adverse events and poor tolerability of current treatment options are major obstacles to therapeutic success. This issue becomes more problematic in the context of treatment resistance, where tolerability and treatment intolerance are most significant.

Bearing all of this in mind, it becomes apparent that the adequate dose and duration of treatment necessary to achieve a response are difficult to achieve in patients with depression. Treatment adequacy, generally determined by dosage and duration, are considered the “tip of the iceberg,” as a number of confounding factors can result in inadequate treatment.

These confounding variables include issues such as treatment intolerance, patient nonadherence, lack of efficacy (despite adequate treatment regimens), safety issues, and comorbid conditions. The figure below depicts this idea (Neuronetics Psychiatry Slide Deck, 2010).

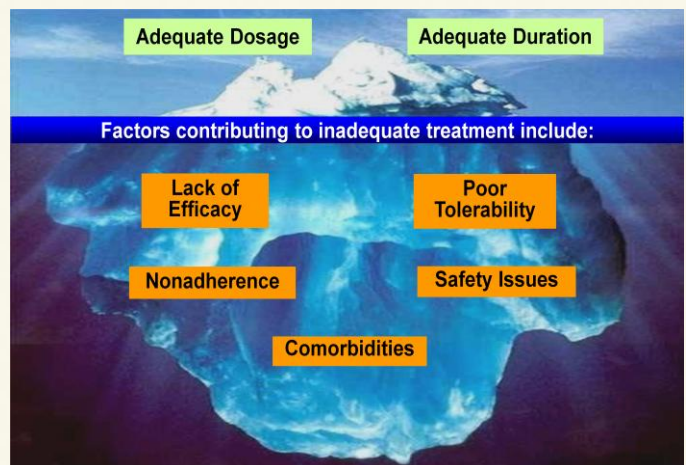


Figure 1. Adequate dose and duration of treatment are only the “tip of the iceberg,” as many other factors contribute to inadequate treatment.

THE TMS INSTITUTE OF PENNSYLVANIA JOINS FACEBOOK!

We recently created a Facebook fan page to serve as a forum where both patients and professionals can share their experiences with TMS Therapy, and learn more about our practice. To become a fan, search for “The TMS Institute of Pennsylvania” in the Facebook search engine, or visit <http://www.facebook.com/pages/West-Chester-PA/The-TMS-Institute-of-Pennsylvania-Advanced-Neuropsychiatric-Solutions/116689375037893>.