

## TMS at The Victoria Clinic

TMS treatment along with other treatments/therapies is provided to patients of the hospital who have been referred for treatment of major depression. The most common indication for the treatment of depression is where antidepressant medication has not relieved symptoms or it has not been well tolerated. Treatment is provided on an inpatient basis. Each treatment session takes approximately 30 to 40 minutes and treatment is provided daily over the course of one to four weeks.

TMS treatment is generally very well tolerated and appears to be free of major side-effects. As well as the treatment of depression, we are exploring the use of TMS in the treatment of several other conditions including obsessive compulsive disorder and schizophrenia. If you are interested in treatment for these conditions, an individual assessment with Dr Atima Saxena may be arranged.

## Fees, charges and health insurance

This treatment is available for inpatients of The Victoria Clinic. Your inpatient stay is generally covered by private health insurance or by Workcover, DVA and TAC. Patients are also welcome to self-fund their admission to hospital to receive this treatment. The Victoria Clinic is a preferred hospital and has contractual arrangements with most major health funds and compensable bodies which include Department of Veterans Affairs, Work Cover and Transport Accident Commission.

## Referral process

To be assessed for suitability for TMS treatment, please fax your referral letter to **(03) 9521 7510**

For further information please contact  
Teresa Gitau - TMS Coordinator

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**The Victoria Clinic**

## Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)



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The Victoria Clinic offers an innovative program providing Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) designed to help people with psychiatric disorders such as depression. TMS is an effective tool in the treatment of depression and other psychiatric disorders and is particularly helpful for individuals who have struggled to achieve wellness with traditional therapies alone.

20 years of studies have shown that TMS is an effective treatment for depression. These studies have shown that TMS acts as an antidepressant treatment, relieving depression in a significant proportion of patients who undergo treatment.

It is likely that it acts by changing activity in areas of the brain that are abnormally active in patients with depression. Following on from this research, a considerable amount of which was conducted by Professor Fitzgerald at Monash University and The Victoria Clinic, TMS has gradually become more widely available over recent years.

It first became widely used in North America and has been approved for use in Australia by the TGA (Therapeutic Goods Administration) and endorsed as an effective treatment for depression by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists. At The Victoria Clinic, this treatment is offered as standard treatment to patients with depression in conjunction with various other antidepressant treatments and therapies.

The program at The Victoria Clinic is run by Dr Atima Saxena and is the longest running TMS Program in Australia. Protocols and procedures developed at The Victoria Clinic, have been adopted in many other hospitals and we continue to be on the cutting edge helping to improve TMS treatment and expand its use into other conditions.



## What is TMS?

TMS is a procedure that involves the focused application of magnetic energy to superficial regions of the brain, changing the activity level of cells in stimulated areas. During the procedure, an electrical current passes through a small coil placed close to the scalp. This current includes a magnetic field. Pulses of the magnetic field are applied, and can pass into the brain without resistance. If the magnetic field is of sufficient strength it will stimulate electrical activity in nerves below the coil, causing neurons to fire. This stimulation may be repeated many times per second and with variation in intensity: these variations will determine the effects of the stimulation- TMS can be applied in differing ways to either increase or decrease local brain activity.



## How does TMS work?

TMS uses a strongly focused magnetic field to activate specific areas of the brain. Repeated TMS stimulation progressively alters brain activity improving depression in the patients who respond to it. TMS requires no anaesthesia or medication and generally you may go about normal activities immediately following the treatment. Most treatment programs involve daily administration of TMS, Monday to Sunday for around four weeks. Each treatment session typically lasts between 30 to 60 minutes.

The magnetic fields produced are about the same type/strength as an MRI. The treatment targets the part of the brain, the Dorsolateral Prefrontal Cortex (DLPFC), which is believed to regulate mood and hence it is an area of the brain involved in depression. The magnetic fields produce very tiny electrical currents, which activate cells within the brain gradually altering their activity over time.