

rTMS Program Policy

What is rTMS?

rTMS is an alternative safe, non-invasive and non-convulsive treatment for patients who are not responding to medication, or who cannot tolerate medication's side effects. For most people, the side effects of rTMS are minimal. Patients can resume daily activities immediately after an rTMS treatment.

Roughly 20% to 40% of adults with major depression do not experience improvement after trying two different antidepressant medications. People in this group have less than a 20% chance of being helped by a third medication, but have a 50% chance of responding to rTMS.

How does it work?

An electromagnetic coil placed against your scalp delivers magnetic pulses that stimulate nerve cells in the regions of your brain that are involved in mood control and depression. It appears that some of these regions of the brain are underactive in people with depression, and stimulation can help to increase their activity level.

The treatment process

You must be referred to us by your family doctor or a medical clinic. The referral form for your doctor/clinic is found at [rTMS-referral-form-2021.pdf \(mdabc.net\)](#)

After you are referred to us for rTMS treatment, we will schedule a consultation with our psychiatrist to explain the treatment and give you an opportunity to ask questions. The consultation will also determine whether rTMS is likely to be suitable for you.

After the consultation, rTMS treatment begins with a series of 30 sessions in six weeks (one session per weekday). The first of these sessions will take 45 minutes. Each treatment after the first one will take 15 to 45 minutes, depending on the type of rTMS that is recommended for you.

In order to ensure the best outcome for you, we strongly encourage you to complete the full course of treatment as advised. In case of illness or cancellation, please call us at 604-873-0103. It is your responsibility to advise the front desk staff if you have missed an appointment and need to rebook.

Maintenance treatment

If you experience improvement by the end of the 30 sessions, “maintenance” treatment will usually be recommended. Maintenance consists of one treatment per week for up to 6 months, OR three treatments on three consecutive days once a month, also for up to 6 months.

Appointments and administration

Usually, other patients will be scheduled for treatment before and after your appointment. If you are more than 5 minutes late for a treatment, your appointment may have to be cancelled so that the next person can be treated. We recommend that you arrive five minutes early.

You will be allowed two missed treatments without charge. Up to two missed appointments will be added at the end of your treatment schedule, at no additional cost. If more than two treatments are missed, it will be your responsibility to pay for each rebooked treatment after the first two. For example, if you missed six treatments, we would rebook you for two appointments at no charge, and the remaining four appointments would be billed.

If you miss an appointment, it may not be possible to book the replacement appointment into the same time slot.

FEES

The initial consultation with our psychiatrist, with a referral from your doctor or clinic, is covered by the Medical Services Plan.

The cost of the first 15 sessions must be paid before your first rTMS treatment appointment, and the cost of the 16th through 30th sessions must be paid before the 16th appointment. The fee for the course of 30 index treatment sessions is \$2800.

If you receive maintenance treatments, the fee for each session is \$85 and is due before the session. You can pay for more than one session in advance if you wish.

Worksafe BC

In some situations, Worksafe BC approves rTMS treatment as part of a return-to-work program. When they do this, they will pay the cost of the first 30 sessions, and they may approve maintenance treatments as well. If they do not approve maintenance treatments, you have the option of paying for them independently.

If Worksafe BC has approved rTMS treatment for you, please give us your Worksafe BC claim number and the name and contact information of your case manager. We must contact your case manager to verify approval before treatment begins.

Extended Health Care Insurance

Some extended health care plans (e.g., Sun Life) may pay for rTMS treatment under certain conditions. If you are not sure, ask your extended health care provider. If your provider agrees to cover rTMS, please provide MDABC with your case number and the contact information for your case manager so that we can verify approval.

REFUND POLICY

If you decide to withdraw from your treatment for non-medical reasons during the first 30 treatments, there will be **no** refund. **Please understand also that a lack of response to the treatment will not result in a refund.**

If you are directed to stop treatment for medical reasons, you will be reimbursed as indicated below, depending on when the withdrawal was ordered:

When treatment stopped	Refund
Before first treatment	80%
Before 7 treatments	50%
Before 11 treatments	20%
After 11 treatments	No refund

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS

Follow up appointments with the psychiatrist are an important part of the treatment program. These sessions allow you to discuss questions and concerns regarding your treatment and to receive follow up care and education in a supportive environment. They also allow the psychiatrist to change the treatment protocol if needed. You can book an appointment by calling our clinic at 604-873 0103.

We recommend that you book a follow up appointment during your treatment and at the end of the treatment. If your treatment is paid for by Worksafe BC, these follow ups are required. For maintenance patients, a follow up is recommended at least once every three months (or more if need) to continue with appropriate maintenance treatment.