



TMS General Information & FAQ's

■ What is TMS (Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation)?

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), or repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS), is an FDA-approved, non-invasive procedure used to treat Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD). By delivering magnetic pulses to the scalp, TMS targets specific brain circuits that are functioning abnormally in their current state. The repeated stimulation induces changes in neural activity, promoting neuroplasticity and retraining the brain's circuits to function more effectively. The process is very similar to the way the brain learns any new skill, like playing the piano, which is why repetition or "practice" is important. The therapy is well-tolerated with minimal side effects, making it a promising alternative to systemic treatments.

*TMS has very rarely been associated with inducing a seizure, and we must note it as a potential risk. However, the way in which we administer TMS at Live Well Psychiatry, reduces that risk to nearly nothing and provides the safest and most comfortable treatment option possible.

■ What does the treatment process look like?

A very important aspect to consider before moving forward with TMS treatments is the time commitment it requires. A TMS treatment process consists of 30 treatment sessions that are completed daily (Mon. – Fri.) over the course of 6 weeks. After the initial hour appointment where Dr. Hoopes creates each patient's individual treatment plan, the daily appointments are only about 15 minutes long. Treatments are offered between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. You and your TMS technician will decide on a set daily time for all your appointments, and most patients are able to fit their daily treatments into their work/school schedule.

■ Am I a good candidate for TMS?

Every patient is different, and mental health treatment is never "one size fits all." So, if you are wondering if you'd benefit from TMS, please contact us, and we'd be happy to help determine if it is the right fit for you. Typically, the best candidate for TMS therapy is an individual who has been diagnosed with Major

Depressive Disorder (MDD) and has not experienced significant relief from standard treatments such as medication or psychotherapy. According to scientific research, TMS has shown particular efficacy in treating MDD, especially in patients who have not responded well to antidepressant medications. While undergoing treatment, it is strongly advised that patients do not consume caffeine, drink alcohol, or take medications that slow brain activity, such as benzodiazepines, because all have been shown to inhibit neuroplasticity, which is essential for TMS to be successful.

■ Does insurance cover TMS? *In-network only, see next question for out of network

TMS treatments are considered a procedure and are NOT billed the same way as medication checks or doctor's visits. Therefore, a process must be done first to be able to go through insurance for help covering TMS. Most insurances will "cover" TMS, but all insurances that do cover it will require certain specific requirements to be met before they authorize the procedure. Our team will submit a prior authorization request (PA) to insurance showing that the interested patient has met their requirements and we believe that TMS is a necessary treatment for this particular case. Once it's reviewed, which may take up to 2-3 weeks, we will either get an approval sent back, which means we can go ahead and start treatment, or a denial with reasoning as to why. An approval is NOT a guarantee of payment; a call to your insurance company will need to be made to determine what your expected portion will be. We will not submit a request to insurance unless the criteria listed below are met. Remember, these are not our requirements but are what insurances require for consideration of coverage (18+ only for coverage).

- 4 past medication trials, from 2 different classes of antidepressants, from the past 3 years for at least 8 weeks at a time. Some may require more than this.
- A diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder (must be severe) with a depression rating scale score of 12+.
- Must be seeing (or have seen within the past 12 months) a licensed counselor for therapy for at least 4 months' duration who will be able to send us a letter of support to add to the PA request.

■ Can I do TMS without insurance?

Yes! We offer a self-pay price that is priced very affordably compared to what you may find elsewhere and is offered for those who have out-of-network/no insurance or may not qualify for insurance coverage due to age, medication trials, etc., so that TMS is still an option. There is no waiting period for getting started if you are a self-pay patient, and we can customize the treatment speed (e.g., 3-week accelerated version) as well as explore different treatment sites.