



NEWS RELEASE

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PARTICIPANTS REQUIRED FOR NEW DEPRESSION TREATMENT TRIAL

The Black Dog Institute and the University of NSW is trialling an alternative treatment for depression – known as Mild Brain Stimulation (MBS) (also known as Direct Current Stimulation).

The trial is taking place at the Black Dog Institute Building, Prince of Wales Hospital, Randwick and is particularly suitable to patients seeking an alternative to medication or who were unable to tolerate anti-depressant drugs or ECT.

Participants will receive MBS for 20 minutes three times per week over about a month.

Depressed patients aged 18 and over who want to take part in the trial should 'phone 02 9382 3720 or email TMSandDCS@unsw.edu.au Information is also available on the Black Dog Institute website blackdoginstitute.org.au

Heading up the research is Psychiatrist, Professor Colleen Loo, who explained that MBS involved passing a very weak electrical current through the skull to stimulate neurons in a region of the brain known as the prefrontal cortex, an area which is underactive in people with depression.

“It primes the neurons so that when they are triggered, their response is enhanced,” said the Professor.

Two small studies of depressed patients by German and American doctors recently found improvements in mood with MBS while researchers in the sixties and seventies reported good results using smaller electrical currents over a few hours.

But with anti-depressant medications being developed around the same time, these trials were not continued.

Professor Loo said scientists were studying different treatments for depression to give patients more options.

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