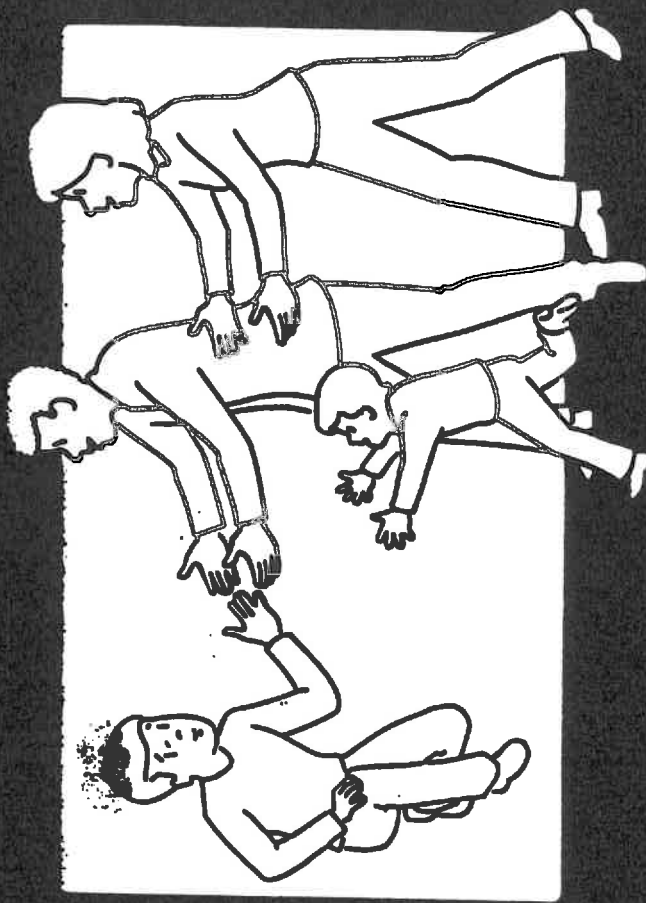


ELECTROCONVULSIVE THERAPY (ECT)



WHAT IS ELECTROCONVULSIVE THERAPY (ECT)?

It's a special procedure that uses electricity to treat severe depression and other mental illnesses.

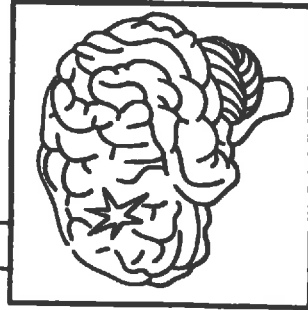
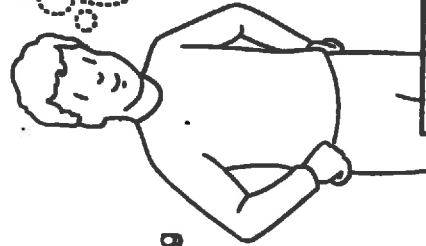
ECT HELPS PATIENTS

who can't use -- or don't respond to -- medication or psychotherapy. It can also help patients in life-threatening situations -- for example, someone at risk of suicide.

ECT CAUSES CHEMICAL CHANGES

in the brain. These changes can help:

- end an episode of depression
- relieve symptoms related to other mental disorders
- treat illnesses that affect the ability to control movement.



This booklet is not a substitute for an informed discussion between a patient (or the patient's legal guardian) and his or her health-care provider of any symptoms, procedures, medications or diagnoses described in this booklet.



©1987 Channing L. Buse Co., Inc. All rights reserved. • Printed in USA
Channing L. Buse Co., Inc., 200 State Rd., South Duxbury, MA 01937
To receive call (800) 626-7723 or write and ask for item number 357189-5-01.

Price List A
2000 Edition

WHY SHOULD I LEARN ABOUT ECT?

Because it could help you or a loved or Used properly, ECT:

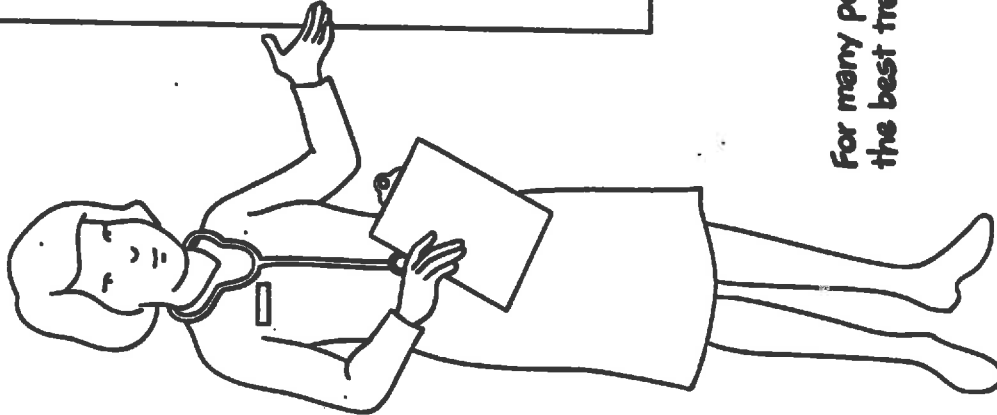
CAN BE VERY EFFECTIVE
ECT helps many patients return to healthy, productive lives.

CAN PROVIDE FASTER RELIEF

In many cases, ECT can produce results more quickly than antidepressant medications and psychotherapy. For this reason, ECT is used to help patients who need relief right away.

HAS FEW RISKS

And, ECT has few side effects. Strict guidelines for ECT use help ensure its safety.



For many people, ECT can be the best treatment option. Learn more...

WHY CHOOSE ECT?

Because in some cases, ECT can produce more effective results than other treatments. ECT is used to help:

SEVERELY DEPRESSED PATIENTS

ECT is most commonly used to help patients who:

- show little or no improvement after receiving psychotherapy and/or at least two types of antidepressants
- cannot take antidepressants because of health problems, or because the side effects are too great.



PATIENTS IN LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS

ECT is used to help patients who are in danger of:

- suicide
- starvation (patients who are too depressed to care for themselves may become malnourished).

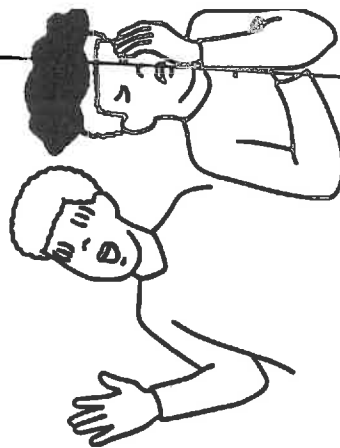
In some cases, ECT is also used to help patients who have:

OTHER

MENTAL DISORDERS

For example, ECT is sometimes used to help patients with:

- bipolar disorder (manic depression) -- a disorder that causes extreme mood swings, including periods of depression and mania (a frantic "high")
- schizophrenia -- a disorder that affects a person's thinking and ability to function.



CERTAIN ILLNESSES

ECT can also be used to treat symptoms that cause life-threatening overactivity or inactivity. For example, ECT has been used to help treat Parkinson's disease (a disorder that affects the nerve cells in the brain that control movement).

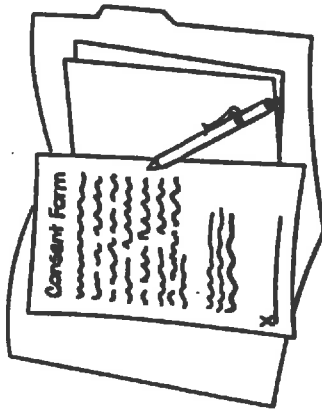
When other treatments are unable to help, ECT may be an effective alternative.

LEARN THE FACTS

There are a lot of myths about ECT. Learning the facts can help you make a more informed decision.

MYTH: ECT IS USED TO PUNISH PATIENTS

FACT: ECT is used to help people, not hurt them. A person must give informed consent to receive treatment. (In some cases, a person's legal guardian may need to give consent.)



MYTH: ECT CAUSES PERMANENT MEMORY LOSS

FACT: Studies show that a permanent inability to form new memories is highly unlikely. Some difficulty remembering events surrounding the period of ECT is common, but most of these memories usually return weeks or months after ECT stops.



MYTH: ECT CAUSES BRAIN DAMAGE

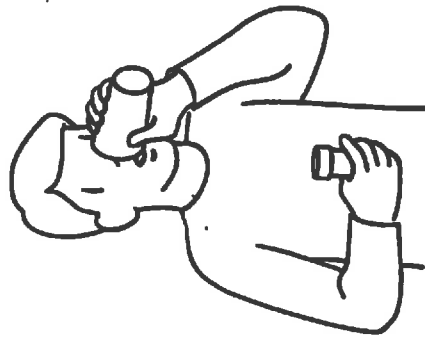
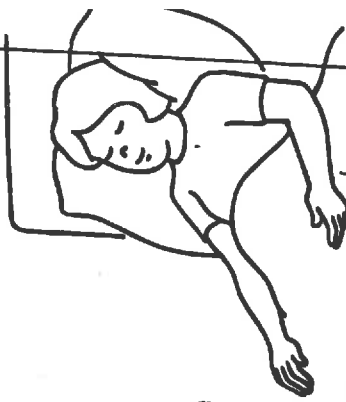
FACT: There is no scientific evidence that ECT causes brain damage.



MYTH: ECT IS PAINFUL

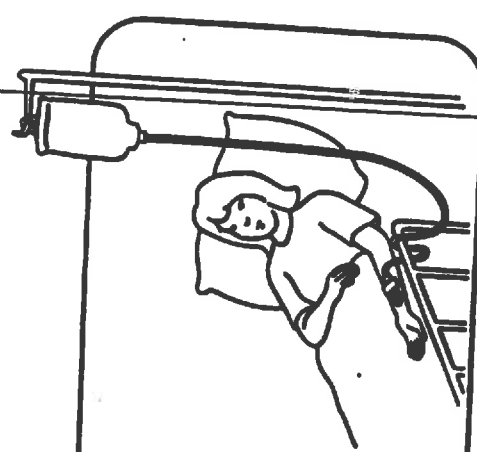
FACT: During the procedure, the patient sleeps peacefully and feels no discomfort.

Some patients may feel nauseated or have a headache when they wake up. These feelings usually pass within 30 to 60 minutes and can be treated with medication, if needed.



MYTH: ONCE YOU START USING ECT, YOU CAN'T STOP

FACT: Many patients receive one series (6 to 12 treatments) of ECT and have no repeat episodes of severe depression. With follow-up treatment, such as antidepressant medications and/or psychotherapy, the effects of one series of ECT treatments can be long lasting.



MYTH: DURING ECT, THE PATIENT'S BODY GOES INTO HARD CONVULSIONS

FACT: In most cases, body movement is very mild.

Muscle relaxants are given to help prevent:

- shaking or jerking
- muscle strain and other injuries.

PREPARATION FOR ECT

Before receiving ECT, the patient will need to:

TALK TO HIS OR HER HEALTH-CARE PROVIDER

The health-care provider will ask about the patient's:

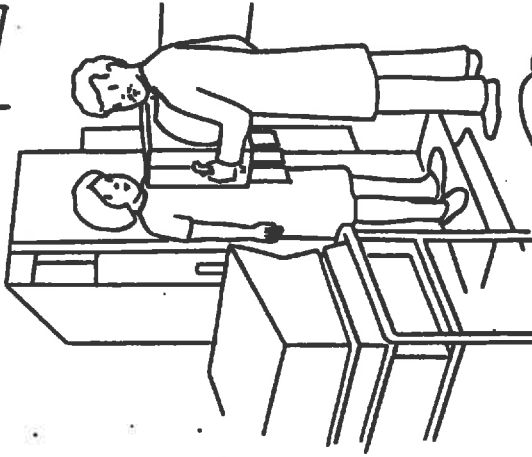
- medical history
- current medications (some medications should not be taken during ECT treatment)
- diet.



HAVE A COMPLETE MEDICAL EXAM

Patients are usually required to have certain tests prior to ECT. These may include:

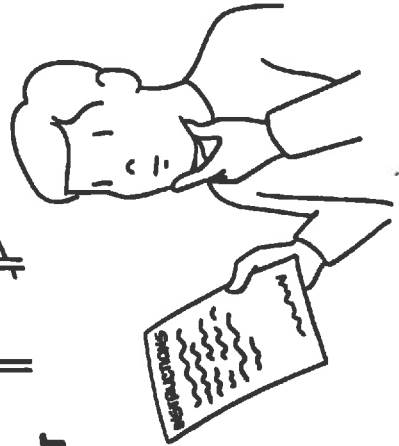
- an electrocardiogram (to monitor the heart)
- chest X-rays
- blood tests.



PREPARE FOR TREATMENT

Before ECT, the patient will be given complete instructions. For example, he or she may be advised to:

- not eat for at least 6 to 8 hours
- arrange for a responsible adult to provide transportation to and from the treatment facility
- follow instructions for taking medications.



GIVE INFORMED CONSENT

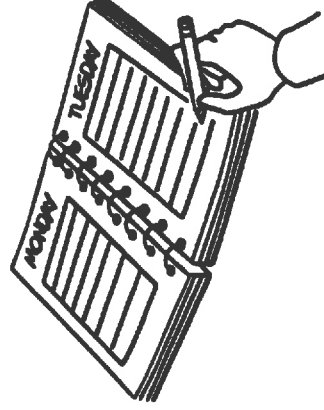
This means the patient agrees to have ECT after being told about:

- the risks, benefits and side effects of ECT
- all available treatment options
- his or her right to refuse any treatment.

These should be explained in terms the patient understands. In some cases, the patient's legal guardian (usually a family member) may give consent.

MAKE FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS

Patients should schedule follow-up appointments before receiving treatment. These should be written down on a calendar or other type of daily planner.



It's very important that patients keep all follow-up appointments.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING ECT?

A nurse accompanies the patient to a room equipped for ECT. There:

THE PATIENT PREPARES FOR TREATMENT

He or she receives:

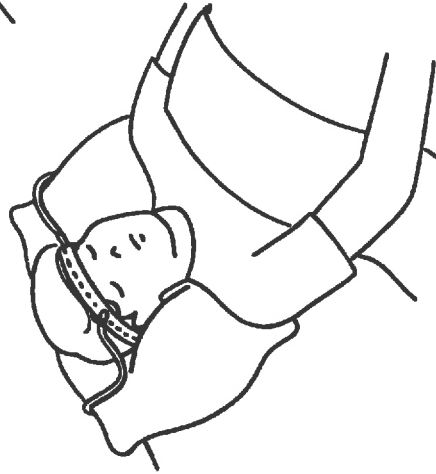
- anesthesia (to help him or her sleep during the procedure)
- muscle relaxants
- oxygen (an oxygen mask is used to help the patient breathe properly).

A bite block (mouth guard) is used to protect the patient's mouth and teeth.



ELECTRODES ARE PUT INTO PLACE

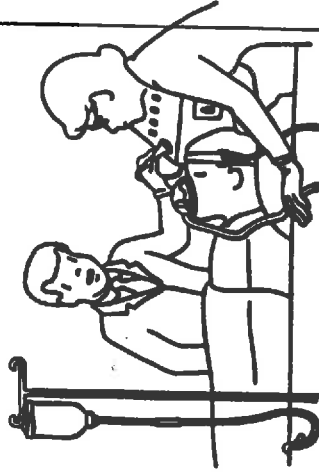
These are positioned on one side of the head (unilateral ECT) or over both sides (bilateral ECT). Placement depends on the patient's needs.



The patient's heart rate and blood pressure are carefully monitored throughout the procedure.

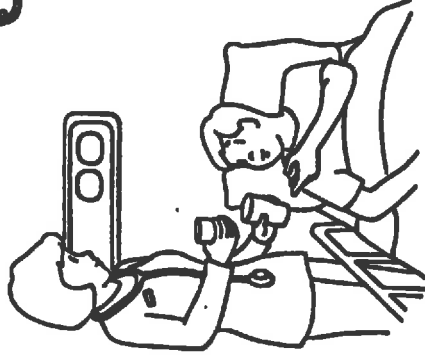
TREATMENT IS GIVEN

A controlled current of electricity is passed through the electrodes and into the patient's brain for about 1 second. This stimulates the brain and produces a mild seizure. The seizure usually lasts about 25 to 60 seconds.



THE PATIENT WAKES UP

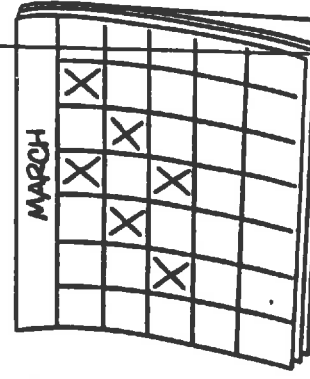
It takes about 5 to 10 minutes after the treatment for the patient to wake up. He or she will receive medication for headache or nausea, if needed. (Sometimes these medications are given before the procedure.)



PATIENTS USUALLY RECEIVE

2 to 3 treatments a week for a total of 6 to 12 treatments. Treatments are usually scheduled at least 48 hours apart to reduce side effects.

Less frequent ECT treatments may be recommended to help prevent relapse for some patients who respond well to ECT.



ECT can be an inpatient or outpatient procedure, depending on the patient's needs and the number of treatments recommended.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF ECT?

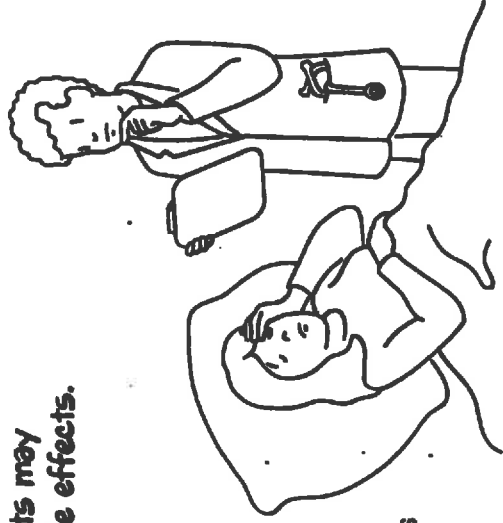
After treatment, patients may experience different side effects.

WHEN A PATIENT FIRST WAKES UP

from ECT, he or she may experience:

- confusion
- headache
- stomachache or nausea
- muscle stiffness or soreness
- increased heart rate
- a rise in blood pressure
- fatigue.

Symptoms usually go away within a few hours.



HOW ECT AFFECTS MEMORY:

- Memory of events around the time of treatment may be lost. But usually, many of these memories come back over time.
- The ability to remember new information may be affected for a short time. Severe memory loss is rare.



Contact the patient's health-care provider if you notice any side effects.

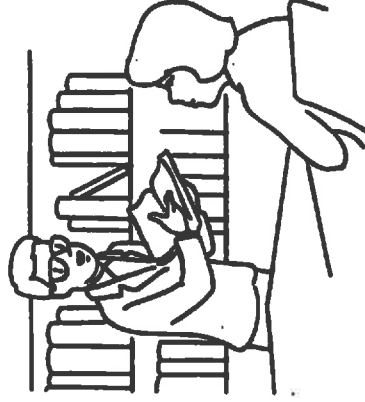
HOW CAN FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS HELP?

There are lots of things you can do. For example:

LEARN ALL YOU CAN

Help the patient make an informed decision about ECT. You can:

- Talk to the patient's health-care provider. Ask him or her any questions you have about ECT.
- Visit your local library. Read more about ECT. Ask a librarian for help, if you need it.

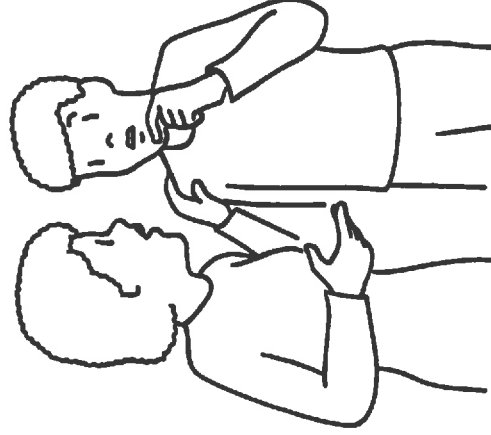


BE UNDERSTANDING

The first week or so after treatment can be frustrating if the patient experiences memory loss. He or she may need help keeping appointments, remembering to take medications, etc.

BE SUPPORTIVE

Keep a positive attitude about ECT. Remind the patient of his or her progress.



Being there for the patient can make all the difference.

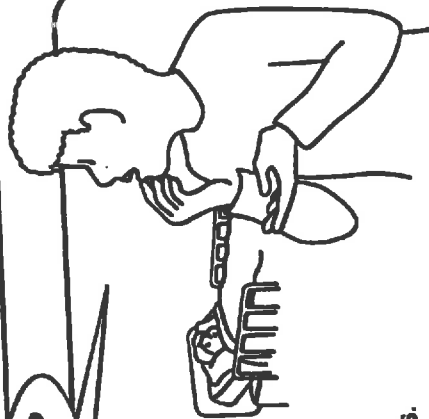
MORE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Can pregnant women or older adults use ECT?



Yes. ECT is often used when antidepressants are not an option. Patients should discuss all benefits and risks with their health-care provider before making a decision. (If the patient is pregnant, be sure to tell her health-care provider.)

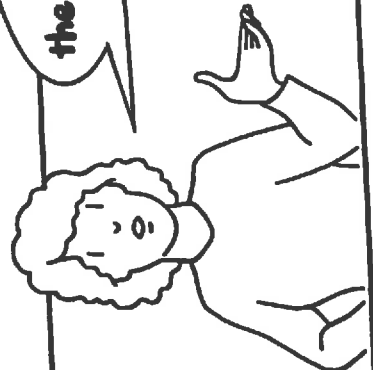
Who shouldn't use ECT?



ECT may not be recommended for certain patients, including those who have:

- certain brain tumors
 - had a recent stroke (brain attack) or heart attack.
- Exceptions are sometimes made depending on the patient's needs.

What if the patient has a seizure after treatment?



This is called a spontaneous seizure. It is very rare. But if it happens, contact the patient's health-care provider immediately.

500--

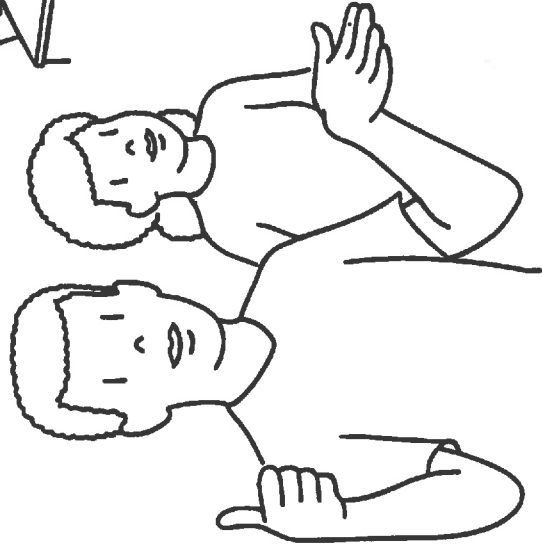
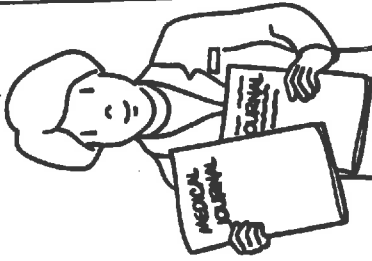
ECT CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT

for severe depression and other mental illnesses.

✓ **FIND OUT MORE**
about ECT.

✓ **DON'T BELIEVE THE MYTHS**
about ECT – learn the facts instead.

✓ **SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP**
if you or someone you care about needs it.



ECT can help people lead fulfilling lives