

What is ECT?

Dr. Gazdag:

This is electroconvulsive therapy: during this treatment, a tonic-clonic seizure is elicited with electricity. This treatment is applied in anesthesia and muscle relaxation to avoid rheumatologic side effects and the negative experience of the patient.

This treatment is not applied, not only in one session, but it's usually six or 10 sessions are needed to successfully treat depression, and in the treatment of psychosis, even as high as 20 sessions can be necessary. The main indication of ECT is a major depression in the treatment of depression. It can be as successful as 70 or 80 percent of the patients showing significant improvement or recovery as a result of the treatment.

The main side effect, which is the focus of recent research, is memory impairment. But as the result shows, after a few weeks, or at maximum a few months, it disappears or the memory function of patients returns to the normal level.