

How safe is ECT?

Dr. Fink:

ECT happens to be one of the safest and most effective treatments in the treatment and the relief of the mentally ill or the psychiatric ill. And I would say that what the public should be aware of is that if they happen to have an illness for which a trained physician recommends ECT, they should accept that recommendation and go ahead, sign the consent, and be treated by a physician who is competent.

Whether your physician is competent or not is a matter of chance for many patients. But ordinarily, ECT happens to be a very safe treatment. It's most effective in catatonia. It's also effective in melancholia. It's effective in delirium, and it's effective in mania. It is one of the magical treatments.