

A new treatment for chronic insomnia: Transcranial alternating current stimulation

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A new treatment for chronic insomnia, transcranial alternating current stimulation, has been found to be effective in a study published in *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*.

Not all adults with chronic insomnia respond to the recommended therapeutic options of cognitive behavioral therapy and approved hypnotic drugs. Transcranial alternating current stimulation may offer a novel potential treatment modality for insomnia.

This study aimed to examine the efficacy and safety of [transcranial](#) alternating current stimulation for treating [adult patients](#) with chronic insomnia. Sixty-two participants with chronic primary [insomnia](#) received 20 daily 40-minute, 77.5-Hz, 15-mA sessions of active or sham transcranial alternating current stimulation targeting the forehead and both mastoid areas in the laboratory on weekdays for four consecutive weeks, followed by a four-week follow-up period.

Of 62 randomized patients, 60 completed the trial. At the end of the four-week intervention, the active group had higher response and remission rates than the sham group. At four-week follow-up, the active group had [better sleep quality](#) compared to the sham group (53.4% [16/30] vs. 16.7% [5/30]), although remission rates were not different between groups. In addition, compared with the sham group, the active group showed improvements in sleep onset latency, total sleep time, sleep efficiency, and sleep quality. The group receiving transcranial alternating current stimulation showed improvement in symptoms both at post intervention and four-week follow up without reporting adverse events or serious adverse responses.

These findings show that the transcranial alternating current stimulation may represent an effective and safe intervention for [chronic insomnia](#) within eight weeks.

More information: Hong-Xing Wang et al. Effect of Transcranial Alternating Current Stimulation for the Treatment of Chronic Insomnia: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Parallel-Group, Placebo-Controlled Clinical Trial, *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* (2019). [DOI:](#)

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