The Depression Research Clinic at Stanford University was founded in 1992 by the Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry, Alan F. Schatzberg, M.D., to conduct research on the causes of and treatments for unipolar depression. The Research Clinic began with one study, which compared two different medications for the treatment of chronic depression. The clinic has grown extensively and today, the clinic employs four research psychiatrists, a research manager, and four full-time research coordinators. The clinic specializes in conducting research on novel and innovative treatment approaches for all types of clinical depression. At the present time, the clinic is conducting numerous treatment studies for depression.

The Depression Research Clinic is run under the direction of Charles DeBattista, D.M.H., M.D. and H. Brent Solvason, Ph.D., M.D. Dr. DeBattista and Dr. Solvason are active investigators in the biology of mental illness, and have published extensively on the neurobiology and psychopharmacological treatment of mood disorders. Currently, their research and clinical interests include treatment of refractory depression, novel treatment strategies, and the neurobiology of mood disorders.

Participation in one of the clinic’s treatment studies involves coming to Stanford for regular visits. During all clinic visits, study patients meet both with a research psychiatrist and a research coordinator. While meeting with the research psychiatrist, patients discuss current depression symptoms and any medical issues related to the treatment. Also, patients meet with a research coordinator, who is trained in clinical psychiatric assessments, to undergo a series of clinical assessments. These clinical assessments allow the research team to thoroughly monitor the patient’s symptoms of depression throughout the course of the treatment study. All studies conducted in the Depression Research Clinic involve treatment with antidepressant medications. The only exceptions are occasional device and procedural studies, such as vagal nerve stimulation (VNS), transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). Treatment received as part of a research study is provided to patients at no cost.

Patient participation in a research study offers several advantages. All clinic visits,
psychiatric evaluations, physical examinations, laboratory work, and medications are provided at no cost to eligible participants. This is a considerable benefit due to the rising costs of mental healthcare. For example, a month’s supply of an average dose of an antidepressant costs between $80 and $120 per month. In addition, as a research patient, you receive comprehensive care on a regular basis by highly trained professionals at Stanford University.

However, there can be disadvantages to being a research patient. Each clinic visit may require more of your time than if you were seen as a private patient and you will be asked to complete a variety of questionnaires as well as answer questions about your depression symptoms at each visit. Moreover, research protocols frequently limit the dosing of the antidepressant medication, and often restrict the use of medications other than those being studied. In some double-blind studies, patients have the possibility of receiving placebo (sugar pill) instead of the active medication. Before participating in any study, you will be told of the possibility and percent chance of being placed in the placebo group. Follow-up care will be provided for a limited time after participation in a placebo-controlled study. All research appointments are scheduled Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Within that time frame, we do try to be as flexible as possible to accommodate patients’ schedules.

Eligibility to participate in a research program is determined through a careful screening process. The first step is a telephone interview lasting approximately 30 minutes, administered by a research coordinator. During the interview, you will be asked about your physical and mental health. If you are eligible and interested, you will be evaluated in person by a research psychiatrist and a coordinator during which time several structured clinical assessments are performed as well as a physical examination. In addition, laboratory tests are performed to ensure that your physical health is compatible with the research criteria. Research studies usually have very explicit criteria for entry and people with serious medical conditions are frequently ineligible.
Treatment of PSYCHOTIC MAJOR DEPRESSION

Sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health

Research is underway to evaluate the efficacy of an investigational medication in the treatment of psychotic major depression (PMD).

Clinical Features of PMD?
Persistent depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure accompanied by physical and cognitive symptoms including delusions and hallucinations.

Treating PMD
The treatment of PMD provides a unique challenge to clinicians. Psychotic depression is a subtype of major depression that appears to have a unique pathophysiology and treatment response. Prior to the advent of Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) in the 1930s, it was frequently observed that delusions in the context of depression predicted poorer outcome. However, psychotic features did not predict poorer response to ECT. The interest in psychotic depression increased with the emergence of the tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs). Uncomplicated major depression disorder (MDD) responded to TCAs, whereas psychotic depression did not. Thus in the past 40 years there has been a renewed interest in psychotic depression. The FDA is considering a special indication of drugs for the treatment of PMD and understanding about the biology is progressing rapidly.

PMD TREATMENT STUDY AT STANFORD

What is the treatment?
Treatment consists of 8 days of Mifepristone or placebo. Those who received placebo have the option of receiving the active medication for an additional 8 days. As part of the study, patients undergo 2 MRI scans, memory assessments and 5 overnight blood draws to assess the stress hormone cortisol. Participants must be between the ages of 18 to 85, have no unstable or untreated medical illnesses, no history of head trauma or neurological disorders and no substance abuse or ECT in the past 6 months. Participants are compensated $400

For more information, please contact:
ghcohen@stanford.edu
Or call (650) 723-3305
(all emails and calls are confidential)

Anna Lembke, MD, Principal Investigator
Greg Cohen, MSW, Study Coordinator

You can also visit us at: http://med.stanford.edu/depression/

For further information regarding questions, concerns, or complaints about research, research related injury, and questions about the rights of research participants, please call (650) 723-5244, or call toll free 1-866-680-2906.
Seeking Participants with Depression for Compensated Research at Stanford University.

Researchers at Stanford University are conducting a research study on individuals with Major Depression. Study participants stay at Stanford Hospital 2 nights, have an MRI scan, diagnostic testing, blood drawn and a test of adrenal functioning. Participation is confidential. All study related costs are paid by Stanford University. Participants who complete the study will be compensated $400.

If you are experiencing symptoms of Major Depression, you may be eligible for screening at Stanford University.

Call today to determine your eligibility. (650) 723-3305 or ghcohen@stanford.edu.

All calls are confidential. For questions regarding your rights as a research subject, call (650) 723-5244.

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EEG Study

The Stanford Depression Research Clinic is seeking volunteers for a research study of EEG-guided medication treatment for Major Depression. We are seeking individuals 18 and older who have tried 'at least' 3 medications for depression without success. You must be currently depressed, in good physical health, and able to come for 9 visits at Stanford University.

Eligible subjects will be offered psychiatric evaluation, antidepressant medication, and study-related laboratory tests at no charge.

Enrolled subjects receive up to $400 for time and travel. Confidential.

Call for more information 650-725-4620 (Maureen).

For further information regarding your rights as a participant, please call (650) 723-5244 or write the Administrative Panel on Human Subjects in Medical Research, Administrative Panels Office, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-5401.
ECT/Memantine Study

The study is designed to determine whether the medication Memantine is an effective treatment for reducing cognitive impairment following electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). This medication could provide an increase in memory function and attention as well as a decrease in confusion, compared to those that do not receive the treatments.

This study is a two-phase double-blind placebo-controlled trial. Participation would consist of an eligibility visit and a series of study visits during regular ECT treatment.

Beginning two days prior to the first ECT treatment, subjects would be randomized to receive either Memantine at 5mg, or placebo each day. The study medication is administered for four consecutive weeks, increasing in dosage up to 10mg twice a day (or until ECT treatments are discontinued if ECT is administered for less than a four weeks). As part of the study, there are a series of blood samples taken, and neuropsychiatric assessments performed, which are measures of memory and cognition.

Patients who qualify for this study have been referred to the Stanford Medical Center's ECT Service for ECT. Eligible participants are between the ages of 18-75.

To learn more about this study, or to see if you would qualify, please call Maureen Chang, Research Coordinator at: (650) 725-4620.

For further information regarding your rights as a participant, please call (650) 723-5244 or write the Administrative Panel on Human Subjects in Medical Research, Administrative Panels Office, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-5401.

Are You Currently Experiencing Depression?

During the past month, have you often been feeling down, depressed, or hopeless? Are you bothered by having little interest or pleasure in doing things? If so, you may be eligible to participate in a research study. The Stanford Depression Research clinic is conducting an 8-week research study using an investigational medication for the treatment of depression.

We are looking for adults, ages 18-70 who have been experiencing sadness and/or lack of motivation nearly every day. Participants will receive 8 weeks of study medication at no cost. Compensation is provided.

For more information, call 650-723-8323 or Email jhawk@stanford.edu

Have You Been Affected by a Chronic Depression?

The Stanford University Depression Research Clinic is now accepting volunteers to participate in a 2-week observational study. If you have been experiencing a chronic depression you may be eligible to participate in this study. Participants must be 18 years or older. Participation is confidential. Participants will be compensated $75 for completion of the study.

For More Information Please Call (650) 723-8323 or Email jhawk@stanford.edu