

## Letter to the Editor

### ECT IN TREATMENT RESISTANT SCHIZOPHRENIA

Sir,

We read with interest the report on efficacy of electro convulsive therapy (ECT) in treatment resistant schizophrenia (Goswami et al 2003). A substantial proportion of patients with schizophrenia remain resistant to treatment. Hence a need for additional/alternative treatments in such situations is strongly felt by psychiatrists. Authors' effort to address this issue is therefore timely and welcome.

However, some methodological flaws in the report make authors' claim of ECT being efficacious in treatment-resistant schizophrenia difficult to accept. Although they have used a robust design, randomized, appropriate analysis, two-way RMANOVA, was not applied. Instead they used one-way RMANOVA separately for ECT and sham-ECT groups. Both groups showed about 20% reduction in BPRS scores. This was significant in ECT but not sham-ECT group. This might well be due to a 30% smaller sample size and hence type-II error in the latter group.

Either group did not improve after the trial as indicated by CGI scores. Their findings hence suggest that ECT may not confer advantage in schizophrenia patients who have shown inadequate response to drugs. This supports Paul et al (1997) too reported similar finding from this country in a recent report.

### REFERENCES

Goswami U, Kumar U and Singh B. (2003) Efficacy of ECT in treatment resistant schizophrenia: A double blind study. Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 45: 26-29.

Paul Sarita E, Janakiramaiah N, Gangadhar BN, Subbakrishna, DK and Jyoti Rao KM. (1998) Efficacy of combined ECT after two weeks of neuroleptics in schizophrenia: A double blind controlled study. NIMHANS Journal, 16: 243-251.

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