

TMS Showdown: NeuroStar vs Brainsway

| | Neuronetics NeuroStar (neurostar.com) | Brainsway Deep TMS (www.brainsway.com/us/depression-treatment-use) |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Date cleared by FDA | 2008 | 2013 |
| Efficacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent meta-analysis reported 18.6% remission rate vs. 5% for sham (Berlim et al, <i>Psychol Medicine</i> 2014;44:225–239). Easier to adapt for off-label uses, because adjusting location of coils to stimulate or inhibit different parts of brain is easier than Brainsway helmet. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High remission rate (32.6% vs. 14.6%) in company-sponsored trial (Lefkowitz et al, <i>World Psychiatry</i> 2015;14:64–73), but no head-to-head trials (so to speak) have been done. Being marketed as “deep TMS” as opposed to Neuronetics’ “repetitive TMS.” |
| Provider experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent customer service, help with getting insurance coverage, help with setting up TMS practice. Larger device and less portable, so requires a dedicated room. Can store stimulus parameters in computer with device, which is convenient when a patient returns. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller and more portable, can move to different rooms (though most busy practitioners will maintain a dedicated room regardless). No ability to store stimulus parameters, so must enter them manually each time patient returns. |
| Patient experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More comfortable coil. Some scalp sensation, but rare to have sensation in mouth. Takes longer: 40-minute treatments five times a week for 4 to 6 weeks. More ability to talk during treatment because ratio of non-stimulus to stimulus is higher. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helmet coil. Deeper and wider penetration leads to more facial movement and jaw pain. Many patients must wear a bite guard. Quicker treatment: 20-minute treatments five times a week for 4 to 6 weeks. Less ability to talk because higher proportion of time involves stimulus, and stimulus often leads to jaw movement. |
| Cost to provider | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About \$75,000 upfront cost to purchase device, then \$100/treatment. Can buy treatments in bulk to pay closer to \$75/treatment. Device not cooled, so can treat only one to two patients per hour, depending on dose required (thus you make less money). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leased by the year, about \$50,000-\$70,000/year. Lease usually covers cost of unlimited treatments in first year, then it is about \$75/treatment. Device is air cooled, so can treat up to three patients per hour (thus you can make more money). |
| Cost to patient | No clear differences. Cost to patient is usually \$300-\$400 per session, total treatment cost varies from \$7,000-\$14,000 depending on number of sessions, office fee schedules, etc... Many insurance companies reimburse at least some of the cost. | |
| Bottom line | Brainsway: More lucrative for provider, possibly more effective, but more side effects. NeuroStar: More comfortable for patients, better customer service for provider, can do psychotherapy during treatment. | |

Magstim TMS: A game changer?

- Magstim is a new rTMS device that was cleared by the FDA in May 2015.
- Rumor has it that it will be offered for sale to physicians at about \$60,000, and that there may be NO per-treatment charges, which would make the whole package *much* cheaper than either NeuroStar or Brainsway. If so, expect both established companies to scramble quickly to change their pricing structure. Magstim’s coil will be air- or fluid-cooled, and will be capable of theta bursts (six-minute treatments).
- More information can be found at www.magstim.com.

From the article:
“Which TMS Device Should You Buy?”
 by Daniel Carlat, MD

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