VERIFY TMS Tips & Tricks

19th April 2023

Methods to maximize comfort for stroke patients receiving high intensity TMS

- We've had a few VERIFY patients with undetermined MEP statuses because they asked to stop TMS prematurely so it is important to focus on the comfort of the patient. Some tips for maintaining comfort at high intensities include:
    - **Be selective with your choice of words**. For example, when using 100% MSO stimulation with stroke patients you could say "this is the highest intensity we're going to go to" or "we won't be going any higher than this and are almost done" which is much softer than phrases like "we're at 100% intensity" or "we're at the highest intensity possible."
    - **Offer the patient earplugs** as a source of discomfort from TMS can be the sound of the TMS click. Earplugs aren't included in the VERIFY budget but you have some at your hospital already and they're very cheap.
    - **Offer encouraging words and see if the patient needs a break**
    - **Share the number of stimulations left as you go**, as this can help make them more willing to finish the session. For example if you are at 100% MSO with bilateral facilitation you might say "you've done a great job so far, we're so close to the end so is it okay if we do 8 more stimulations while you squeeze both hands? Then we'll be all done."
    - The above tips and others can be found at https://verifytraining.blogs.auckland.ac.nz/tms-stroke-patients/

MEP- status determination

- To classify a patient as MEP- you need to check that no MEPs can be elicited in either muscle while attempting all the following together:
    1. Stimulator intensity at **100% MSO**, and
    2. **Systematic movement** of the coil, and
    3. Participant performing **bilateral facilitation**

Managing electrical noise during bilateral facilitation

- If electrical noise appears during bilateral facilitation, it is likely the patient is pulling on the electrodes and/or cables. This will often show up as a prolonged stimulus artefact.
- **Reduce the tension on the electrodes and/or cables while facilitating** to prevent this happening should eliminate the noise.

TMS recertification is required yearly

- This should be done yearly from the date you received your last TMS training certificate to ensure no deterioration of TMS skills or knowledge of the protocol (https://verifytraining.blogs.auckland.ac.nz/tms-recertification/).
- Recertification will involve a **single 15-question quiz**, and if you receive 80% or better you'll be emailed a certificate that you should upload into the TMS training placeholder on WebDCU.

Urgent assistance or advice needed during a TMS session?

Call/text the TMS hotline at (833)337-2227 (Mon-Fri 8am-9pm ET)
or call Dr. Borich on 404-712-0612