

10 Facts You May Not Know About Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)

Is Electroshock a "New and Improved" Miracle Cure or Brain Damaging Torture? The controversial treatment is still done today despite the dangers.

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, December 22, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As healthcare systems around the country have been stretched to the limit, first by the opioid crisis and now COVID-19, many hospital treatments are being reviewed. One of the most controversial treatments done in hospitals today is Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT or "Electroshock") for severe depression and other diagnoses. The [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) (CCHR) has been exposing the dangers of ECT since the 1960's.

10 FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT ELECTROCONVULSIVE THERAPY (ECT)

Psychiatry: Still Shocking After All These Years

1. FIRST CAME THE PIGS

The "science" behind electroshock as treatment was born out of a slaughterhouse in Rome, Italy. In 1938, Italian psychiatrist Ugo Cerletti saw pigs being electric shocked before slaughter, causing them to convulse and become more docile, thereby making them easier to kill. This inspired Cerletti to try the same "treatment" on humans.



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Jack Nicholson in the classic film "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest"

2. A "GOOD KIND OF BRAIN DAMAGE?"

More than 80 years after electroshock (Electroconvulsive Therapy or ECT) was invented, psychiatrists admit they still don't know how it "works." Numerous theories have been proposed, none of which have found mainstream scientific acceptance. Among the many psychiatric theories is that ECT "caused a good kind of brain damage."

3. NO LESS BRUTAL THAN IT USED TO BE

Psychiatrists claim that modern ECT is nowhere near as barbaric as the electroshock treatment depicted in the Academy-Award-winning film, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. But the voltage and electrical current of modern ECT is higher than it was during the era of electroshock portrayed in the film, when patients used to break bones due to the violent convulsions produced by the "treatment."

4. WHAT'S "NEW" IS NOT IMPROVED

The reason patients no longer break bones isn't because there is less electrical current (modern ECT uses a stronger current), but because muscle relaxants are first administered, making ECT appear less brutal. The muscle relaxant itself can be highly dangerous, with the most commonly used ECT muscle relaxant documented to cause cardiac arrest, prolonged respiratory muscle paralysis and potentially life-threatening and/or fatal allergic reactions.

5. THE POWER TO HARM

Modern electroshock treatment delivers a pulse of current to the brain that is 7.5 times stronger than electrical fences used to deter bears, which deliver an electric shock to the bear when it touches the charged wires. Yet psychiatrists lobby to increase the use of ECT on children.

6. THE APA WANTS MORE POWER TO SHOCK KIDS

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) requested that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which regulates the ECT device, broaden the clearance for using ECT on children, stating, "Having access to a rapid and effective treatment such as ECT is especially meaningful in children



and adolescents.” The FDA approved ECT for use on those aged 13 and above for certain “disorders,” but admits it doesn’t regulate what age groups psychiatrists decide to administer ECT to.

7. ALREADY SHOCKING 0-5 YEAR-OLDS

Psychiatrists claim children are “infrequently” electroshocked, but no state or federal agency is documenting how many children are being electroshocked each year. State Medicaid records obtained solely through Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests have revealed 19 states are currently electroshocking children, with 7 states shocking children between the ages of 0 and 5 under the guise of “treatment.”

8. COMMON SENSE – DON’T SHOCK KIDS

The World Health Organization’s Resource Book on Mental Health, Human Rights and Legislation states: “There are no indications for the use of ECT on minors, and hence this should be prohibited through legislation.” Four U.S. states and Western Australia have already banned ECT for those up to the ages of 12–16.

9. USED ON PREGNANT WOMEN

Electroshock is also being used on pregnant women, even in the third trimester. While psychiatrists claim this is perfectly safe, a study done by Norwegian researchers found the infant mortality rate was 7.1% following the administration of ECT to pregnant mothers. Documented adverse events of ECT on pregnant women include miscarriage, stillbirth, fetal heart problems and malformations.

10. NO SAFETY OR EFFICACY REQUIRED

The only mode of “regulation” for the use of electroshock in the United States is the FDA, which regulates the device. The FDA has never required any clinical trials proving safety or efficacy of the treatment. It has simply allowed the device to remain on the market, despite admitting electroshock can cause permanent memory loss, cardiovascular complications, brain damage and death.

Summary: Most people don’t believe that electroshock (electroconvulsive therapy or ECT) is still being used in modern society. This is most likely because the mere idea of electroshock is so abhorrent that most people simply can’t believe its still being used. Factually, ECT is one of the most brutal “treatments” ever inflicted upon individuals under the guise of mental health care. Yet approximately 1.4 million people worldwide, including an estimated 100,000 Americans, are given electroshock each year, including the elderly, pregnant women and children.

“10 Facts You May Not Know About Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)” was excerpted from the

Citizens Commission on Human Rights International website: www.cchrnt.org

To support the campaign to ban electroshock click here.

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights National Office in Washington, DC, has advocated for the abolition of Electroconvulsive Treatment (ECT) at the state and federal level. The Citizens Commission on Human Rights traveling exhibit has been displayed in Washington, DC, at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Caucus, as well as other locations. The exhibit has toured more than 441 major cities around the world and has educated over 800,000 people on the history and contemporary practices of psychiatry which are still rampant with abuse.

About Citizens Commission on Human Rights: CCHR is a nonprofit, non-political, non-religious mental health watchdog. Its mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. CCHR was co-founded in 1969 by the Church of Scientology and Professor of Psychiatry Emeritus Dr. Thomas Szasz.

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