

# CCHR: Psychiatric Barbarism Alive and Well in Our Nation's Mental Health Wards

*Mental Health Watchdog calling for a ban on the use of the electroconvulsive therapy machine due to lack of clinical studies on safety and effectiveness.*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- What was once thought to be a barbaric vestige of past psychiatric abuse, is today, a too common occurrence around the world. Psychiatrists prescribe [electroconvulsive therapy](#) (ECT or shock treatment) for approximately 100,000 people a year in the US alone. [1]



ECT sends up to 460 volts of electricity through the brain in order to induce a grand mal seizure.

For the uninformed, the effect of ECT seizures are similar to grand mal seizures where the body stiffens, arms and legs often jerk, sometimes the face turns pale blue and the individual loses consciousness. [2]

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Though psychiatry has tried to adopt a medical model they have fallen short of proving any causal relationship to an individual's emotions and dangerous mental health treatments.”

*Diane Stein, President CCHR  
FL*

While today's shock treatment is touted as being a kinder gentler shock treatment compared to earlier days because it utilizes anesthesia, muscle relaxers and mouth guards, the FDA has never required clinical studies to prove safety and effectiveness. Given that ECT can result in up to 460 volts of electricity being shot through a person's head and the fact, that the amperage and voltage are actually greater than formerly used, the [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) (CCHR) is calling for a ban on the use of the

device. [3]

Why would such a drastic and potentially dangerous procedure still be in use today?

Paula Bolton, program director of McLean's Psychiatric Neurotherapeutics Program, is quoted in an article promoting that scientists claim seizures can "reset" brain function. Because brain activity involves electrical signals passing through neurons, ECT "is like when you reboot your computer when something has gone awry." In the same sentence she adds, "although there are a lot of theories, no one is really quite sure why it works." This same article also fails to mention that this unproven theory of rebooting the brain comes with devastating side effects including death and brain damage. [4,5]

Diane Stein, president of the Florida chapter of CCHR points out, "The hard cold truth is that psychiatrists know that this is a dangerous and unproven process yet ECT is pushed as a treatment for depressive resistant depression and suicide when there is no evidence that ECT prevents suicide and patients in a study group who received ECT were 16 times more likely to attempt suicide than the non-ECT patients." [6]

"Bolton's statement and ECT practice," Stein continues, "is not only presumptive and incorrect but it is dangerous. At best it is experimental guesswork for profit, which sometimes leaves the patient with severe memory loss and confusion, the long-term effects of which, are not known. The utter lack of effective and safe solutions by psychiatry over the years cannot continue to be tolerated."

"That a person's distress could come from something more than short-circuiting or miswiring in the brain seems to have eluded the psychiatric community," says Stein. "Though they have tried to adopt a medical model they have fallen short of proving any causal relationship to an



The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater.



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Electroconvulsive therapy, or ECT, is a procedure used by some psychiatrists. Up to 460 volts of electricity are sent coursing through the brain. Why? To produce a grand mal seizure they claim will "reset" or "reboot" the brain.

individual's emotions and their dangerous treatments." [7]

There is, as well, the issue of forced shock, such as the case of a psychiatric patient in 2021 by the name of Henley, who attempted escape from Shands psychiatric hospital. Like a scene out of a *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* sequel, Henley was cornered by staff and forcibly shocked for weeks with resulting memory loss, confusion, nerve pain and depression even long after he finally left Shands. [5]

Ron Bassman, executive director of MindFreedom International, also forced into shock therapy when he was 25, lost his memory for about a year and a half and believes shock hindered his creativity.

Bassman's experience motivated his wanting to assist others. He's said that often people who've undergone shock will ask him if their memory would return. "It's unpredictable," he has said. "There's usually some fragments that don't come back. Despite rationalizations about side effects, studies reveal the damage shock does," says Bassman. He suggests there is no such thing as true informed consent, because doctors don't tell patients the irreparable damage shock does. "This is pretty much an ongoing fight to inform the public."

Jim Gottstein, an attorney and founder of Psychrights, stated "shock causes permanent memory loss and closed head injury. He added electroshock doesn't treat mood disorders. It may work for a day or two because of the euphoria from a head injury, but once effects wear off, doctors have to keep performing it, causing progressive brain damage and memory loss. Most people not forced to undergo electroshock were angry they weren't told the truth about it. Electroshock is as barbaric as it seems," says Gottstein. [8]

"The use of the ECT device in this country should be banned altogether, that is the bottom line," states Stein. Click here to [sign a petition to ban ECT](#) in the United States.

About CCHR: Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR's mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of



"Therapy or Torture" is a documentary using facts, studies and patient stories to prove that newer methods of electroshock have not resulted in fewer adverse effects and that no one would "consent" to it if all information of its damage was made known.



mental health. The Florida chapter of CCHR is an award-winning nonprofit in the area of mental health human rights and government relations. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: "Thousands and thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the 'free world' tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of 'mental health,'" he wrote in March 1969.

Sources:

[1] [elevatepsychiatry.com/treatment-methods/electroconvulsive-therapy/](http://elevatepsychiatry.com/treatment-methods/electroconvulsive-therapy/)

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[3] Therapy of Torture? The Truth About ECT <https://www.cchr.org/ban-ect/>

[4] [http://www.thymatron.com/catalog\\_cautions.asp](http://www.thymatron.com/catalog_cautions.asp)

[5] <https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/ect-shouldnt-be-last-resort-treatment>

[6] Is ECT Making Mental Healthcare Better or Worse? <https://www.newsweek.com/heres-why-tracking-electroconvulsive-therapy-should-mandatory-across-nation-1751363>

[7] <https://www.madinamerica.com/2022/02/need-shift-away-ect-antidepressants-depression/>

[8] <https://www.alligator.org/article/2021/11/shock-therapy>



An experienced speaker who received certification on the Baker Act, Florida's mental health law, through the Department of Children and Families, Diane Stein is sought after on topics such as coercive psychiatry and mental health rights.

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