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The application of neuromodulation techniques in the treatment of alcohol addiction

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Only a limited number of alcohol dependent patients appear to benefit from existing psychotherapeutic and pharmacological treatment modalities. This fact highlights the need for different treatment approaches. Recent evidence however, suggests a possible beneficial role for neuromodulation techniques. In particular, repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) seems able to change subjective alcohol craving, an important factor in relapse risk. Further, these techniques also tend to enhance cognitive executive functioning. Recent developments and future research possibilities concerning the application of rTMS in the treatment of alcohol addiction will be discussed.