

## S13-03

### POST- ECT PHARMACOTHERAPY: AN UPDATE

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Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) is a very effective treatment in severe psychiatric disorders. One of the main drawbacks of ECT is the high and early relapse rate in the absence of post- ECT treatment. After a successful ECT- course, pre- ECT pharmacotherapy is often continued. There is, however, no evidence that proves this strategy effective. The research on post- ECT treatments is limited, but promising. The available studies show that relapse rates can be decreased from more than 80% to 40% or less using either imipramine (1), the combination of lithium and nortriptyline (2) or continuation- ECT (3). The question whether or not starting antidepressants during the course of ECT ca further decrease relapse rates remains unanswered. Preliminary data show that starting antidepressants medication during the ECT course has no impact on post- ECT relapse. There is an urgent need for further research on treatment strategies to decrease the unacceptable high relapse rates after recovery from ECT.

References:

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2. Sackeim H et al. JAMA, 2001; 285:1299-1307.
3. Kellner C et al. Arch Gen Psychiatry, 2006; 63: 1337- 1344.