Multiyear Evaluation of Maintenance Electroconvulsive Therapy in an Adult With Autism Spectrum Disorder, Catatonia, and Challenging Behavior

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Maintenance ECT (m-ECT) is required to prevent relapse when treatment is either withdrawn or discontinued temporarily during a period of posttreatment evaluation. However, notwithstanding the clinical imperative for m-ECT, relatively few studies have addressed long-term multiyear outcomes among individuals with autistic catatonia and serious challenging behavior.

The basis for m-ECT is that the therapy is a “treatment rather than a cure” and a strategy toward relapse prevention with vulnerable clinical populations. Maintenance schedules must be individualized to the unique presentation of children and adults, their responsiveness to initial ECT, access to follow-up treatment services, mitigating factors, and pace of symptom resolution.