

SHOULD PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY WHO ARE DEPRESSED BE ROUTINELY TREATED WITH ANTIDEPRESSANT MEDICATION OR VAGUS NERVE STIMULATION (VNS)? - VNS

E. Ben-Menachem

Sweden

Elinor.Ben-Menachem@neuro.gu.se

VNS is an established therapy for the treatment of epilepsy. It is also approved both in the USA and Europe as a therapy for patients with difficult to treat depression; VNS has been shown in several studies in patients with epilepsy to significantly improve mood and depression. On the contrary, antiepileptic drugs are implicated in causing depression and suicide ideation in patients with epilepsy. Therefore patients with refractory epilepsy who also have depression or other mood disorders should be given the opportunity to try VNS instead of yet another antiepileptic drug. Successful treatment could mean that patients would not have to be treated with concomitant antidepressants along side their epilepsy therapy.