Title

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Journal

Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 58(4)

ISSN

0890-8567

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Publication Date

2019-04-01

DOI

10.1016/j.jaac.2018.11.013

Peer reviewed

Double-Blind, Sham-Controlled, Pilot Study of Trigeminal Nerve Stimulation (TNS) for ADHD

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Running Head: Trigeminal Nerve Stimulation for ADHD

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Acknowledgments: This study was supported by National Institute of Mental Health grant R34 MH10182 (to Drs. McGough and Loo, Co-PIs). Study devices and some materials were provided by NeuroSigma, Inc. in response to an investigator-initiated request.

Presentation Information: This study was presented as an abstract at the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's 64th Annual Meeting, Washington DC, October 23-28, 2017.

Key Words: Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, clinical trial, neuromodulation, trigeminal nerve stimulation.

ABSTRACT

Objective: Trigeminal nerve stimulation (TNS), a minimal risk, non-invasive neuromodulation method, has showed potential benefits for ADHD in an unblinded open study. This blinded sham-controlled trial was conducted to assess efficacy and safety of TNS for ADHD, as well as potential changes in brain spectral power using resting-state quantitative electroencephalography (qEEG).

Method: 62 children aged 8-12 years, with full-scale IQ ≥ 85 and KSADS-diagnosed ADHD, were randomized to four weeks nightly treatment with active or sham TNS, followed by one-week without intervention. Assessments included weekly clinician-administered ADHD-Rating Scales (ADHD-RS) and Clinical Global Impression (CGI) scales, and qEEG at baseline and week 4.

Results: ADHD-RS totals showed significant group-by-time interactions (F = 8.12, df = 1/228, p = .005); week 4 Cohen's *d* = .5. CGI-Improvement also favored active treatment (Chisq = 8.75, df = 1/168, p = .003); number-needed-to-treat (NNT) = 3. Resting-state qEEG showed increased spectral power in right frontal and frontal midline frequency bands with active TNS. Neither group had clinically meaningful adverse events.

Conclusion: This study demonstrates TNS efficacy for ADHD in a blinded sham-controlled trial, with estimated treatment effect size similar to non-stimulants. TNS is well-tolerated and minimal risk. Additional research should examine treatment response durability and potential impact on brain development with sustained use.

Clinical trial registration information: Developmental Pilot Study of External Trigeminal Nerve Stimulation for ADHD; http: / / clinicaltrials.gov/; NCT02155608.

INTRODUCTION

Although stimulant medications are regarded as the most effective and commonly employed treatment for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) [1], side effect concerns, social stigma, and parental preferences for non-medication approaches contribute to a lack of long-term compliance [2, 3]. In addition to standard psychosocial interventions such as parent management training and academic accommodations, there has been increasing interest in other non-medication approaches to ADHD, including EEG-based neurofeedback, computer-based working memory training, noninvasive brain stimulation methods such as transcranial direct stimulation and transcranial magnetic stimulation, however, scientific studies of these modalities have largely failed to demonstrate positive effects [4-8].

Trigeminal nerve stimulation (TNS) is a non-invasive, minimal risk neuromodulation method approved in Canada and Europe for adult treatment of medication-resistant major depression [9, 10], and epilepsy [11]. Similar to the vagus nerve, the trigeminal conveys sensory inputs from skin, muscles, and skull to extensive connections within the locus coeruleus, reticular activating system, and nucleus tractus solitarius [12], regions involved in selective maintenance of attention [13]. Recent data provide increased evidence that TNS exerts its effects via central projections to cortical structures [14]. TNS utilizes a small stimulator worn during sleep to emit a low-level current. Thin wires extend from the TNS device to an adhesive electrode worn across the forehead over branch V_1 of the trigeminal nerve. Assuming that benefits of vagal stimulation rely in part on the same brain connections, it was hypothesized that TNS similarly improve seizures and mood, but without costs and risks associated with surgical device implantation.

Several TNS depression studies suggested a potential role in ADHD. First, item-analysis of mood rating scales revealed that TNS was associated with selective improvements in concentration and attention (Ian Cook, personal communication). Second, a small positron emission tomography (PET) study showed that acute TNS activated several brain regions implicated in ADHD and executive function, including the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and the inferior frontal, medial, and middle frontal gyri, as well as the parietotemporal cortex [15]. Finally, TNS is extremely well tolerated in adults and virtually without adverse events, suggesting suitability for pediatric testing [16].

A preliminary open trial in ADHD-diagnosed youth suggested TNS was 1) readily accepted by parents and children; 2) associated with substantial reductions in parent and clinician ADHD symptom ratings and significant improvements on multiple indices of parent-reported executive functioning; and, 3) associated with dramatic improvements in laboratory measures of response inhibition [17]. Treatment was well tolerated and without meaningful adverse events.

The present study investigated the potential efficacy of TNS for ADHD treatment in a four-week double-blind sham-controlled trial, followed by one blinded week without treatment to assess response persistence. This is the first blinded sham-controlled trial of TNS for ADHD or any pediatric condition. Secondary aims included assessment of cortical activation mechanisms, measured with quantitative electroencephalography (qEEG), as well effects on anxiety, mood, sleep, growth, and safety. The study further assessed time course effects, provided estimates of treatment effect sizes, and measured the success of blinding procedures in anticipation of future clinical trials.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were recruited through community advertisements and internet postings. Children aged 8 to 12 years with DSM-5 ADHD, based on the Kiddie Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia (KSADS-PL) [18] and clinical interview, minimum total of 24 on the clinician-administered parent ADHD-IV Rating Scale (ADHD-RS) [19], baseline Clinical Global Impression-Severity Score (CGI-S) ≥ 4 [20], estimated full-scale IQ ≥ 85 based on WASI subtests [21], and able to cooperate with EEG and other study procedures, were enrolled. Exclusion criteria were current major depression or autism spectrum disorder, lifetime psychosis, mania, seizure disorder, or head injury with loss of consciousness, or baseline suicidality. Children were medication free for at least one month prior to participation and remained so for the trial. Before screening, parents and children received thorough verbal and written descriptions of study requirements and provided written permission/assent. The UCLA Institutional Review Board approved all study procedures.

Study Design

The study was a four-week, double-blind, sham-controlled trial, followed by one blinded week without intervention. Screening included diagnostic and IQ assessment [18, 21], clinician-completed parent ADHD-RS and CGI-S rating, parent-completed Childhood Behavioral Checklist (CBCL) [22], and the parent- and child-rated Affective Reactivity Index (ARI) [23]. Eligible participants returned at baseline for repeated clinician ratings, additional parent- and child-completed behavioral measures, computerized tests of executive function, and EEG. Randomization was 1:1, using random block lengths of four and six, to active or sham TNS, with equal stratification on low (≤ 6) or high parent ARI scores to assess potential effects on irritability. Families were taught proper electrode placement and device operation at baseline. Active or sham TNS was administered nightly during sleep. Participants returned after one week

for repeated measurement of behavioral and cognitive outcomes and assessment of blinding integrity (Early Impressions Questionnaire, below). Clinician and parent behavioral ratings were repeated weekly. After week 4, behavioral, cognitive, and EEG measures were repeated and treatment (active or sham) discontinued. Participants and investigators remained blinded for one additional week when final behavioral and cognitive outcomes were repeated to assess potential benefit persistence post discontinuation.

TNS Intervention

TNS procedures were based on previous work in epilepsy [11, 24], adult depression [9, 10], post-traumatic stress disorder [10] and ADHD [17]. Stimulation was via a CE-mark approved neurostimulator, the Monarch eTNS System™ (NeuroSigma, Inc., Los Angeles CA). The stimulator was worn on the child's pajamas or t-shirt and attached with thin wires to disposable, silver-gel, self-adhesive patch electrodes. Parents applied patches across their child's forehead to provide bilateral stimulation of V_1 trigeminal branches for approximately 8 hours nightly. Patches were removed each morning. The active condition utilized a 120-Hz repetition frequency, with 250-μs pulse width, and a duty cycle of 30 seconds on/30 seconds off. Stimulator current settings between 2 and 4 milli-amperes (mA) (range: 0-10 mA) were established at baseline by titration, which identified a stimulation level below the participant's subjective level of discomfort. Power was provided by 9-volt lithium medical-grade batteries (Energizer L522, Eveready Battery Co., St. Louis, MO), which were replaced every day.

Active and sham systems were identical in appearance and operation. Participants were informed via a scripted presentation that "pulses may come so fast or so slowly that the nerves in the forehead might or might not detect a sensation." Each night parents turned on the device,

pressed the "up" button until the stimulation was uncomfortable or until the device reached the maximum current, and then pressed "down" to reduce it by one 0.1mA step. In active devices, current flowed to the patch and was limited to a safe range. Some, but not all, in both active and sham groups reported feeling some sensation, which generally faded with time. With sham, no current flowed, so participants adjusted settings without actually controlling current.

One research assistant who managed study devices had access to group assignments. All other staff, parents, and participants were blinded to randomized group. To assess study blinding effectiveness, parents completed an Early Impressions Questionnaire [25] after the initial treatment week to quantify expectations of success with their assigned condition.

Quantitative Electroencephalography

qEEG acquisition followed previously used procedures [26]. Participants underwent qEEG recording, including a five minute, eyes-open resting condition. Recordings were carried out using an Electrical Geodesics (EGI; Eugene, Oregon) GES300 system with 128-electrode high-impedance Hydrocel Geodesic Sensor Nets. Data were referenced to Cz, impedance threshold set at 50 kOhms (per manufacturer standard), and sampling rate was 1000 Hertz (Hz). Eye movements were monitored by electrodes placed on the outer canthus of each eye for horizontal movements (REOG, LEOG) and by electrodes above the eyes for vertical eye movements. Key head landmarks (nasion, inion, preauricular notches) and 3-D electrode locations were recorded (Polhemus, Inc.) to allow three-dimensional reconstruction of scalp electrode positions.

Continuous EEG data were imported into the EEGLAB [27] environment for processing. The EEG data were: 1) high pass filtered (>1 Hz), 2) re-referenced to the channel average, 3) rejected for excessive noise, and 4) decomposed using independent components analysis (ICA),

which separates brain from non-brain (e.g., muscle, eye) artifacts that contribute to scalp recorded signals. Independent components were inspected for spatial, spectral, and temporal properties to identify those with patterns corresponding to non-brain sources of signal such as eye blinks, lateral eye movement, cardiac artifacts, single channel artifacts and high-frequency line noise; these components were excluded from further analyses. Cleaned data were then back-projected into channel space for resting state analyses. Fourier transform was used to estimate spectral power in frequencies from 1-50 Hz for the following channels: F3/4, Fz, C3/4, Cz, P3/4, PZ and averaged across standard frequency bands: delta (1-3 Hz), theta (4-7 Hz), alpha (8-12 Hz), beta 1 (13-16 hz), beta 2 (17-25 Hz), gamma 1 (30-40 Hz) and gamma 2 (40-50 Hz).

Outcome Measures

The primary efficacy outcome measure was the clinician completed ADHD-RS Total Score [19], based on parental interview and all available clinical information, and completed at baseline and over subsequent weeks. Secondary behavioral outcomes included weekly clinician-scored CGI-Improvement (CGI-I) scales [20], weekly parent-completed Behavioral Rating Inventory of Executive Functioning (BRIEF) Scales [28], Conners Global Index [29], Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire (CSHQ) [30], and teacher-completed Conners Global Index [29]. Ratings at baseline and weeks 4 and 5 included the parent and child completed ARI and Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children (MASC) [31], and clinician-completed Children's Depression Rating Scale (CDRS-R) [32]. Secondary cognitive outcomes included the computer-based Spatial Working Memory test [33] and Attention Network Task [34] at baseline and weeks 1, 4, and 5. qEEG was conducted at baseline and weeks 1 and 4. Cognitive outcomes will be presented in a subsequent publication addressing neurobiological response mechanisms. Safety

was assessed by height, weight, and vital sign measurements at each clinic visit, and weekly open-ended adverse event inquiries, parent-completed Side Effects Rating Scales [17], and clinician-completed Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scales (C-SSRS) [35].

Statistical Analysis

All analyses were conducted in SAS 9.4. To confirm successful randomization, we compared groups on baseline demographic and clinical characteristics using t-tests and chi-square tests as appropriate. Subsequently, data were assessed for normality and sphericity and outcome variables plotted as a function of time to determine forms of treatment trajectories (e.g., linear, quadratic, piecewise linear with change of slope, etc.).

Our primary analytic tool was the general linear mixed model (GLMM) with treatment group (active vs. sham), time (in weeks), and group-by-time interactions to test for differential treatment effects as primary predictors, along with subject level random intercepts. GLMMs properly account for correlations induced by repeated measurements within subjects and automatically handle missing values, allowing maximum use of available data. As such, all participants with baseline data were included in analyses. We fitted a single model for each dimensional outcome from baseline to end of the four-weeks. Separate models were fit for the blinded discontinuation period between weeks 4 and 5.

Categorical outcomes were assessed using chi square (X^2). For CGI-I, a binary variable was created wherein scores of "1" or "2" (very much improved or much improved) were deemed "improved" versus those scores > 2 considered "not improved". CGI-I was determined weekly in reference to baseline. Adverse event frequencies within each group were tallied over the study course based on the Side Effects Rating Scale and spontaneous report. Likert scale values from

the Early Impression Questionnaire were assessed via logistic regression as predictive of treatment group to assess validity of blinding procedures. Effect size differences between groups were estimated using Cohen's *d* and number-needed-to-treat (NNT). For Cohen's *d*, cutoff values for small, medium, and large effects were defined as .2, .5, and .8, respectively [36]. For NNT, small, medium, and large effects were defined as 9, 4, and 2, respectively [37].

Effects of multiple testing were minimized by identifying the ADHD-RS total score *a priori* as the single primary outcome. However, for a developmental pilot the identification of sensitive outcomes and protocol parameters carried more importance for future research design than minimizing Type I error. All results are therefore reported using an uncorrected significance level of α=.05.

RESULTS

Demographics and Disposition

Of 79 individuals screened, 62 were eligible and randomized to active (n=32) or sham (n=30) TNS. Of those ineligible, 13 failed inclusion criteria, 2 met exclusion criteria, and 2 failed to return after initial screening. One participant left the trial after week 3, leaving a total N=61 (active n=32; sham n=29). Two additional participants withdrew between weeks 4 and 5, leaving a final study N = 59 (active n=31; sham n=28). qEEG data for 3 participants were excluded due to excessive movement artifact; leaving a total of 56 participants (active n=30; sham n=26) for EEG analyses. Participant characteristics are summarized in Table 1. No significant group differences were found for age, sex, race/ethnicity, height, weight, vital signs, IQ, ADHD subtype, or baseline behavioral ratings.

[Table 1]

Efficacy Measures

Initial analyses demonstrated that dependent variables were normally distributed and that assumptions of sphericity were not violated. Plotted ADHD-RS totals over time suggested a non-linear pattern, with decreasing scores in both groups during the first week, followed by ongoing improvement, albeit slower, in the active group vs. a flattening response trajectory with sham (Figure 1). Consequently, dimensional behavioral outcomes were fitted via a mixed effects model with group-by-time interactions to test for treatment effects using a piecewise linear time trend. This was parameterized in the model as a standard linear variable, time (ranging from baseline to 4 weeks) and a second variable, time2, defined as 0 at baseline and time past week 1 for subsequent weeks. The time2 coefficient represents the change in slope after the initial week. Height, weight, and vital signs demonstrated linear patterns and were evaluated using time only, as were measures taken only at baseline and week 4.

[Figure 1]

ADHD-RS totals showed significant group-by-time interaction, demonstrating a differential treatment effect ($F = 8.12$, $df = 1/228$, $p = .005$). The significant main effect of time ($F = 39.97$, $df = 1/228$, $p < .0001$) revealed initial improvement in both groups, greater with active TNS. Time2 also demonstrated a significant effect ($F = 28.96$, $df = 1/228$, $p < .0001$), but no group-by-time2 interaction, indicating an equal leveling-off of improvement following week 1. Estimated Cohen's *d* at week 4 was 0.50, suggesting a medium-size treatment effect. CGI-I over the 4-week course similarly favored active over sham ($X^2 = 8.75$, $df = 1/168$, $p = .003$). Improvement rates for active vs. sham were 25% vs. 13%, 34% vs. 15%, 47% vs. 12%, and 52% vs. 14% based on raw CGI-I at weeks 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively, with a trend for increasing

improvement with active TNS over time (X^2 = 5.08, df = 3/168, p = .17). Number-needed-to-treat (NNT) based on CGI-I at week 4 was 3.

Table S1 summarizes other exploratory outcomes with significant effects (available online). The same pattern of time, time2, and group-by-time effects was found with both Inattentive and Hyperactive-Impulsive ADHD-RS subscales as with total scores. A similar piecewise linear trajectory, but no group or interactive effects, was seen with the parent-completed Conners. The MASC-Parent Report showed trends for time (F = 3.58. df = 1/53, p = .06) and group-by-time (F = 2.90, df 1/53, p = .09) effects, with estimated Cohen's *d* =.33. The CSHQ revealed significant time and time2 effects, but no group-by-time interactions, for Bedtime Resistance, Sleep Anxiety, and Total Sleep Problems. Other behavioral outcomes, including the MASC Child Report, CDRS-R, BRIEF, remaining CSHQ scales, teacher Conners, and ARI scales were not significant.

With resting state qEEG, active TNS demonstrated increased broadband power, whereas sham exhibit decreased power in the right frontal region (Figure 2). Treatment groups did not differ at any channel or frequency band at baseline (all p's > 0.3). EEG spectral power statistics are summarized in Table S2 and reveal significant group-by-time effects for frequency bands in the right frontal (F4 delta, theta, beta, gamma) and frontal midline (Fz gamma) channels, with trend level effects for frequency bands in the mid-frontal region (Fz delta, theta, beta). Left frontal region (F3) effects were generally in the same direction but did not reach significance (all p's > 0.2). No significant group, time, or group-by-time effects were seen in central or parietal electrodes (all p's > 0.2).

[Figure 2]

To facilitate functional interpretation of qEEG changes, significant EEG outcomes and ADHD behavioral ratings were evaluated using Pearson partial correlations with age as a covariate. Week 4 changes in right frontal (F4 theta, beta bands) and frontal midline (Fz Gamma 1) regions were significantly associated with changes in ADHD-RS total and hyperactive/impulsive scores (r's range -.34 to -.41) (Table S3). Spectral power changes had weaker correlations with inattentive symptoms and none were statistically significant (all p's > 0.13). These correlations suggest that treatment-related spectral power increases in frontal midline and right frontal regions were associated with lower ADHD-RS scores, particularly hyperactive-impulsive, at trial end.

Discontinuation Outcomes

ADHD-RS totals worsened in both groups between weeks 4 and 5 following treatment discontinuation. Week 4 mean (SD) scores for active vs. sham groups were 23.39 (7.88) and 27.50 (8.08) respectively; with week 5 scores of 25.52 (7.84) and 29.11 (7.79). Time effect was significant (F = 6.23, df = 1/57, p = .02), with a trend for group differences (F = 4.18, df = 1/57, p = .05), but no significant group-by-time interaction (F = .12, df = 1/57, p = .73), suggesting both groups deteriorated at similar rates. Week 5 CGI-I ratings showed 13% improved in active vs.7% improved in sham groups compared to baseline (X^2 = .53, df = 1, p = .46). Cohen's *d* at Week 5 =.46, suggesting maintenance of a medium-size treatment effect one week after treatment cessation.

Safety and Tolerability

Significant increases in weight and pulse were seen with active TNS compared with sham over four weeks, but there were no group differences in increased height or blood pressure (Table 2). There were no serious adverse events in either group and no participant withdrew for

adverse events. C-SSRS showed no responses suggestive of suicidality. Side Effects Rating Scale responses are summarized in Table 3, with notable increases in fatigue, headache, and increased appetite with active TNS, and increased hyperactivity with sham. Table S4 summarizes spontaneously reported adverse events. One initially concerning adverse event, skin whitening/discoloration under the patch site in some darker skinned participants, occurred in active and sham groups and was attributed to patch removal and concomitant loss of superficial skin layers. Skin discoloration resolved with subsequent sun exposure and time.

[Table 2]

[Table 3]

Assessment of Study Blinding

Responses on the Early Impressions Questionnaire showed no differences predictive of group assignment on questions pertaining to belief in having an active or sham device: 1) how successful do you think your current treatment will be in reducing ADHD symptoms (Odds Ratio = .93, 95% CI = .76-1.15, p = .50), or 2) how much do you feel the current treatment will help reduce ADHD symptoms (Odds Ratio = .90, 95% CI = .70-1.14, p = .37).

DISCUSSION

This study demonstrated the efficacy and safety of TNS in ADHD treatment, confirming and expanding previous open-label findings [17]. ADHD-RS response patterns suggest that the greatest degree of TNS-related improvement occurs during the first week, with additional improvement accruing with ongoing use. The week 4 medium-size effect is within the same range typically evidenced with non-stimulant ADHD medications [38]. Weekly CGI-I ratings further indicate that response rates increase with sustained treatment, at least over four weeks.

Worsening scores over the discontinuation week likely reflect in part an awareness of treatment cessation in both groups. Even with the parallel score declines, however, lower active ADHD-RS scores at week 5 compared with sham suggest some persistent benefit after treatment discontinuation. Together, results support the utility of TNS as a component of clinical ADHD management.

At a mechanistic level, TNS is thought to stimulate the nucleus tractus solitarius, which relays signals to cortical and subcortical structures such as the thalamus, hypothalamus, amygdala, locus coeruleus, reticular activating system, anterior cingulate and insula [12, 14, 17]. Treatment-related changes in resting state qEEG measures suggest that middle and right frontal regions show increased activation with active TNS relative to sham. Furthermore, these changes are primarily associated with improvement in hyperactive and impulsive symptom changes. Previous scalp qEEG studies reported increased power in delta, theta, and beta frequency bands at right frontal electrodes with successful stopping within a stop signal task [39, 40], suggesting a significant association between right frontal cortex and inhibitory control. The right inferior frontal cortex, pre-supplemental motor area (SMA), and subthalamic nuclei (STN) are thought to be part of a fronto-basal-ganglia network utilized in suppression of motor behavior [41]. Taken together, we hypothesize that the neurophysiological mechanism underlying TNS treatment effects in ADHD is activation of the fronto-basal ganglia network, resulting in increased EEG power in middle and right frontal electrodes and subsequent improvement in hyperactive and impulsive behaviors.

Many studies of nonmedication ADHD treatments are biased towards false positive findings, particularly when blinding is compromised or raters are highly invested in treatment success [42]. Results from the Early Impressions Questionnaire showed no differences in

outcome expectations between treatment groups after one week using the randomized device, suggesting that our sham procedures successfully accomplished double-blinding of group assignment. Improvements seen in both active and sham groups at week 1 likely reflect some placebo-response secondary to the high level of parental involvement in administering treatment. Nonetheless, further improvement over subsequent weeks with active TNS suggests emergence of true treatment effects, demonstrated in both clinician-rated ADHD-RS and CGI-I scores. In contrast, parent Conners ratings have significant time effects in both groups, but no group-by-treatment differences, likely due to some placebo response among all raters. EEG findings, which demonstrated clear treatment-related-differences in cortical activation, provide independent verification of positive behavioral outcomes unbiased by rater expectations. Small but measurable TNS effects on parent-reported anxiety provides further evidence of positive response.

As with previous reports, results confirm that TNS carries minimal risk and is well tolerated and accepted by ADHD-affected children and their parents [17]. Adverse events had minimal clinical significance. While reports of headache and fatigue were associated with active TNS, no one abandoned treatment due to side effects. Increases in weight and reported appetite in the active group are not readily explained and require ongoing investigation in longer studies.

The potential significance of observed increased heart rate with active TNS remains unclear. Prior acute studies of TNS have revealed both increases [17] and decreases [14] in pulse. As with the vagus nerve, TNS is known to elicit parasympathetic activity, which is expected to result in pulse decreases or bradycardia [43]. Pulse increases in this study, while statistically significant were not within a clinically abnormal range and were not associated with clinical symptoms. ADHD stimulants are also associated with small increases in heart rate that

are not viewed as clinically meaningful. Results derived from this small sample might also represent outlier findings not generalizable to larger group. The issue clearly requires further investigation, but is not inconsistent with the assertion that TNS poses minimal risk.

The study assessed acute response to TNS over four weeks. It does not inform on whether additional improvement would accrue with ongoing treatment or whether benefits persist over time. There might have been some bias toward non-medication approaches to ADHD management by parents of study participants, but this view is common among many parents seeking ADHD treatment for their children. As such, results from this study should be widely generalizable, but support for TNS would be strengthened if replicated in additional patient groups. We did not assess potential utility of TNS as adjunctive therapy to standard ADHD interventions. The study failed to support several hypotheses arising from the open-label trial, particularly positive benefits seen in executive functioning, measured by the BRIEF, and selected sleep measures, measured by the CSHQ. However, since mean ratings on these measures were subclinical, it is unknown whether improvement might be evidenced if limited to those individuals with clinically significant difficulties. These relationships require additional analysis.

TNS is a non-medication minimal risk intervention with proven efficacy in reducing ADHD symptoms. Although the present study finds that only slightly more than half of those receiving therapy have clinically meaningful improvement, the virtual lack of significant side effects should make it a popular treatment choice for many patients with ADHD, particularly for parents who prefer to avoid psychotropic medication. The quality of evidence for TNS exceeds that which is available for many commercially available complementary interventions. TNS is potentially a valuable new addition to the ADHD treatment armamentarium.

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Table 1. Participant Characteristics at Baseline by Assigned Treatment Group [a]

	Total Sample (N=62)		Active Group (n=32)		Sham Group (n=30)	
Age, y, mean (SD)	10.4	(1.4)	10.3	(1.4)	10.5	(1.4)
Sex, n (%)						
Male	40	(65)	19	(60)	21	(70)
Race/Ethnicity, n (%)						
White	40	(65)	20	(63)	20	(67)
Black	4	(6)	4	(13)	0	
Asian	10	(16)	5	(16)	5	(17)
Mixed/Other	8	(13)	3	(9)	5	(17)
Hispanic	10	(16)	5	(16)	5	(17)
Height, cm, mean (SD)	142.2	(9.9)	142.8	(10.1)	141.5	(9.9)
Weight, kg, mean (SD)	37.1	(10.5)	38.8	(12.3)	35.4	(8.1)
Systolic BP, Mean (SD)	107	(11.8)	108.5	(11.53)	106.2	(12.2)
Diastolic BP, Mean (SD)	64.3	(7.9)	65.0	(8.2)	63.6	(7.6)
Pulse, Mean (SD)	76.7	(11.6)	71.7	(9.2)	76.6	(13.1)
Full Scale IQ, Mean (SD)	108.9	(13.2)	110.4	(12.3)	107.3	(14.2)
ADHD Subtype, n (%)						
Combined	39	(63)	22	(69)	17	(57)
Inattentive	21	(34)	9	(28)	12	(40)
Hyperactive/Impulsive	2	(3)	1	(3)	1	(3)
Comorbidity, n (%)						
ODD	20	(32)	11	(34)	9	(30)
DMDD	17	(27)	10	(31)	7	(23)
Social Phobia	10	(16)	7	(21)	3	(10)
Separation Anxiety	2	(3)	1	(3)	1	(3)
Generalized Anxiety	10	(16)	6	(19)	4	(13)
Any Anxiety	18	(29)	11	(3)	7	(23)
Enuresis	6	(12)	5	(16)	1	(3)
Encopresis	2	(3)	0		2	(7)
Tourette's Syndrome	2	(3)	2	(6)	0	
Motor Tic	1	(2)	0		1	(3)
ADHD-RS-T, mean (SD)	32.5	(6.2)	32.1	(6.3)	32.8	(6.2)
ARI-P, mean (SD)	4.5	(3.7)	4.4	(3.9)	4.5	(3.9)
MASC–Child, mean (SD)	60.6	(25.7)	59.0	(26.2)	62.4	(25.5)
MASC–Parent, mean (SD)	47.4	(19.2)	46.2	(19.2)	48.7	(19.2)
CDRS-R, mean (SD)	9.71	(6.4)	10.4	(6.9)	9.0	(5.8)
CGI-S, n (%)						
4	21	(34)	10	(31)	11	(37)
5	41	(66)	22	(69)	19	(63)

Note: ODD = Oppositional Defiant Disorder; DMDD = Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder; ADHD-RS-T = ADHD Rating Scale Total Score; ARI-P = Affective Reactivity Index- Parent Report; MASC = Manifest Anxiety Scale for

Children; CDRS-R = Children's Depression Rating Scale; CGI-S = Clinical Global Impression Severity Scale. [a] No significant differences between groups (all $p > .05$).

Table 2. Vital Sign Changes Over Double Blind: Active vs. Sham TNS.

Measure	Active				Sham				Effect	F	df	P value
	Visit 0		Visit 4		Visit 0		Visit 4					
	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)	Mean	(SD)				
Height cm	142.8	(10.1)	143.1	(10.0)	141.5	(9.9)	142.3	(9.8)	Group	<1	1/229	.59
									Time	**5.83**	**1/229**	**.02**
									Group*Time	1.03	1/229	.31
Weight kg	38.8	(12.3)	39.7	(10.5)	35.4	(8.1)	35.7	(10.3)	Group	1.62	1/128	.21
									Time	**5.18**	**1/128**	**.02**
									Group*Time	**6.89**	**1/128**	**.01**
Pulse bpm	71.7	(9.2)	81.8	(12.7)	76.6	(13.1)	75.2	(12.6)	Group	<1	1/128	.79
									Time	1.10	1/128	.30
									Group*Time	**4.61**	**1/128**	**.03**
Systolic BP	108.5	(11.5)	111.0	(12.7)	106.2	(12.2)	107.8	(12.5)	Group	<1	1/128	.93
									Time	<1	1/122	.76
									Group*Time	<1	1/128	.39
Diastolic BP	65.0	(8.2)	65.1	(9.3)	63.6	(7.6)	61.0	(9.2)	Group	<1	1/128	.64
									Time	1.75	1/128	.19
									Group*Time	1.49	1/128	.22

Boldface type indicates significance at $p < .05$.

Table 3. Percent Participants Endorsing Side Effects on Rating Scale at Some Point Over Four-Week Blinded Trial: Active vs. Sham.

Side Effect (% Reporting)	Active (N=32)	Sham (N=30)	Side Effect (% Reporting)	Active (N=32)	Sham (N=30)
Trouble sleeping	19	17	Rapid heartbeat	3	0
Nightmares	6	0	Out of breath	3	3
Drowsy	22	13	Nausea	3	0
Hyperactive	41	63	Stomachache	6	3
Fatigue	13	3	Constipation	9	7
Feels strange	0	7	Frequent urination	6	0
Tingling	3	0	Frequent sweating	3	3
Headache	13	0	Decreased appetite	3	3
Stuffy nose	16	20	Increased appetite	19	7
Muscle cramps	3	3	Skin rash	6	0
Muscle twitch	0	7	Finding words	0	7
Tremor	0	3	Apathy	6	7
Slurred speech	0	3	Clenching teeth	13	7

Figure Legends

Figure 1. ADHD-RS Total Scores Over Four-Week Blinded Trial: Active vs. Sham TNS.

Figure 2. Treatment Related Change in EEG Spectral Power at F4 electrode. During eyes-open resting state, active TNS treatment was associated with increased broad band spectral power from baseline to Week 4 (orange solid and dashed line, respectively) compared to sham treatment, which showed no change or slight decrease from baseline to week 4 (blue solid and dashed lines, respectively), particularly in the right frontal region (panel a). Amount of change for each treatment group in the active and sham TNS groups (panel b), suggests increased power in the active group and decreased power in the sham group across multiple frequency bands. Depiction of the significant group by time interaction effect for F4 gamma power (panel c), data for other frequency bands and the Fz electrode show similar patterns. Base=baseline, W4=week4 treatment end, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$.

My correspondence regarding resubmission did not include instructions to include a manuscript with highlighted changes. As such, no such manuscript was saved. I worked with co-authors to make sequential revisions, which were complicated in part by changes in word limits and our efforts to understand what the new publication requirements were.

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Manuscript Title: Double-Blind, Sham-Controlled, Pilot Study of Trieminal Nerve Stimulation (TNS) for ADHD

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Section 3: On an attached page, please list the funding, acknowledgments, and financial disclosures of all authors.

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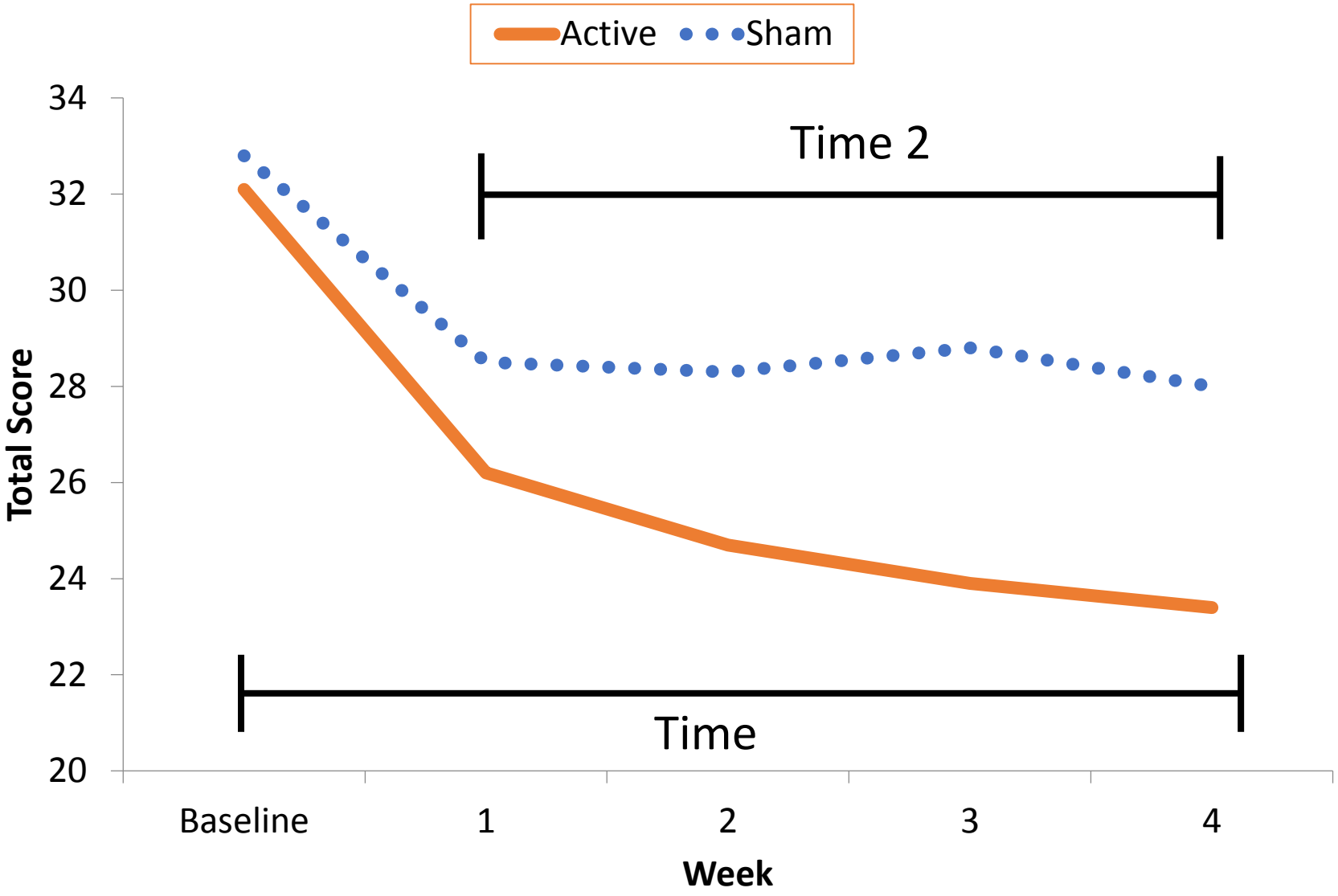
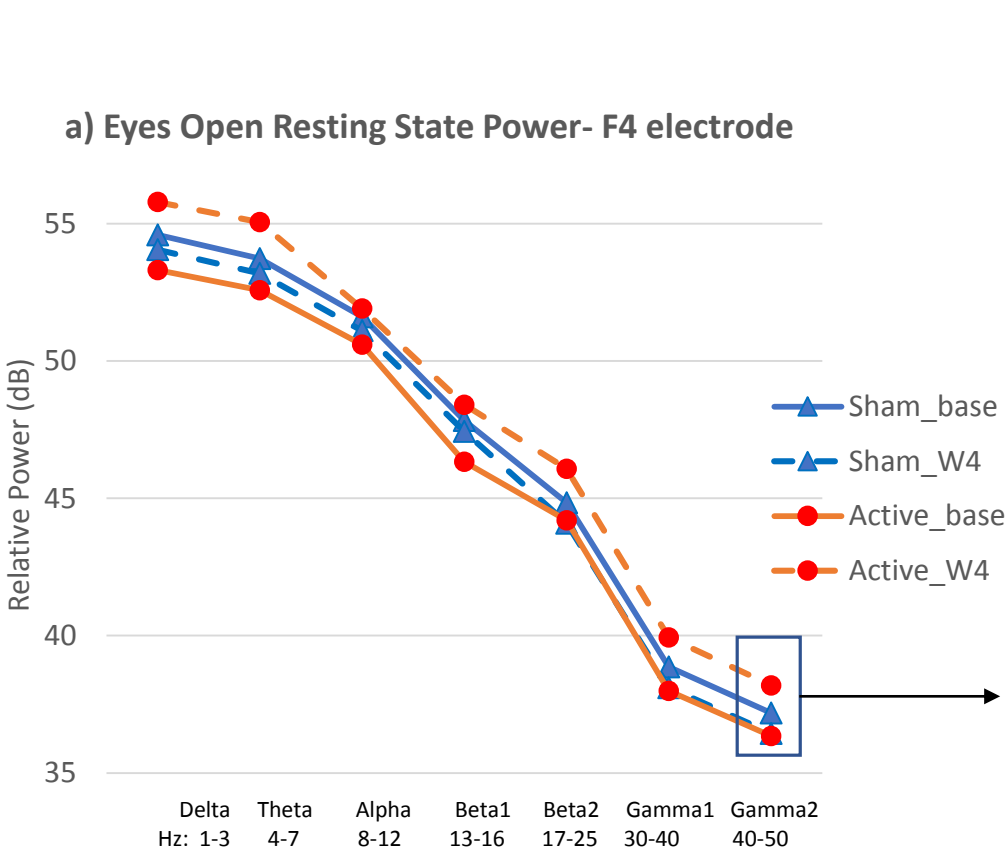
Acknowledgments: This study was supported by National Institute of Mental Health grant R34 MH10182 (to Drs. McGough and Loo, Co-PIs). Study devices and some materials were provided by NeuroSigma, Inc. in response to an investigator-initiated request.

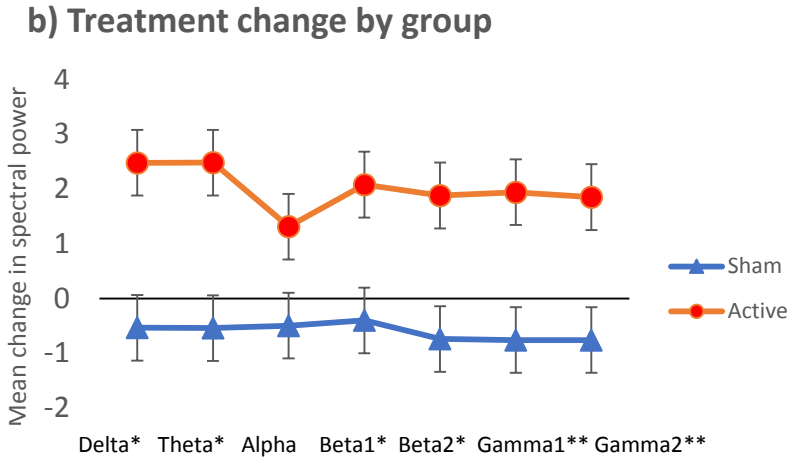
Disclosure Dr. McGough has provided expert testimony on behalf of Janssen, Shire, and Tris Pharmaceuticals. Dr. Leuchter has received research support from Neuronetics, Breast Cancer Foundation, CHDI Foundation, and NeuroSigma. He has served as a consultant to Ionis Pharmaceuticals, CHDI Foundation, and NeoSyn Inc. He serves as Chief Scientific Officer for Brain Biomarker Analytics LLC (BBA); has stock options in NeoSync. Inc., and equity interest in BBA. Dr. Cook has received research support to UCLA from NeoSync. Inc; has been an advisor to Arctica Health, Cereve, and HeartCloud; has served as part of the management team of NeuroSigma, Inc. (on leave since 6/2016), and has been allocated stock options. His patents are assigned to the University of California. Drs. Sturm, Cowen, Sugar, and Loo, Ms. Tung, and Ms. Salgari report no financial conflicts of interest.

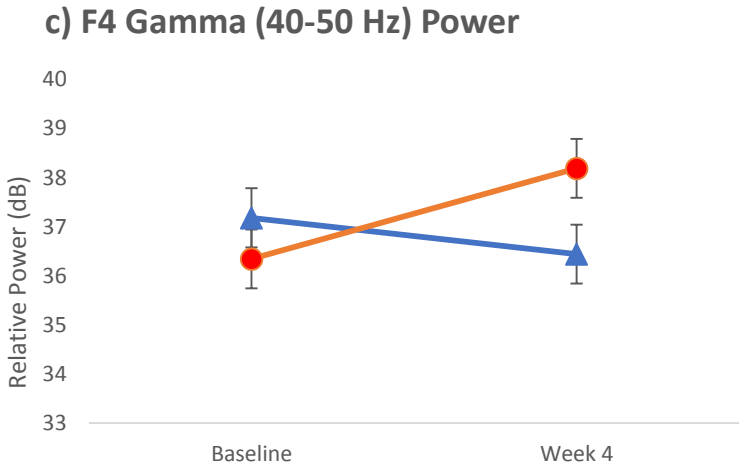
Figure


Active
Sham
Time 2
Time
Total Score
34
32
30
28
26
24
22
20
Baseline
1
2
3
4
Week

Figure


a) Eyes Open Resting State Power- F4 electrode
Relative Power (dB)
55
50
45
40
35
Delta Hz: 1-3
Theta 4-7
Alpha 8-12
Beta1 13-16
Beta2 17-25
Gamma1 30-40
Gamma2 40-50
Sham_base
Sham_W4
Active_base
Active_W4


b) Treatment change by group
Mean change in spectral power
4
3
2
1
0
-1
-2
Delta* Theta* Alpha Beta1* Beta2* Gamma1** Gamma2**
Sham
Active


c) F4 Gamma (40-50 Hz) Power
Relative Power (dB)
40
39
38
37
36
35
34
33
Baseline
Week 4

Trigeminal Nerve Stimulation for ADHD

Table S1. Secondary Efficacy Measures with Significant Effects For Double-Blind Active vs. Sham TNS.

Measure	Effect	F	df	p-value
ADHD-RS-Inattentive Subscale	Group	<1	1/228	.55
	Time	34.30	1/228	**<.0001**
	Time2	23.20	1/228	**<.0001**
	Group*Time	5.35	1/228	**.02**
ADHD-RS-Hyperactive/Impulsive Subscale	Group	<1	1/228	.62
	Time	29.28	1/228	**<.0001**
	Time2	23.02	1/228	**<.0001**
	Group*Time	7.83	1/228	**.007**
Conners Global Index-Parent Report	Group	.01	1/209	.91
	Time	13.03	1/209	**.0004**
	Time2	7.45	1/209	**.007**
	Group*Time	<1	1/209	.36
CSHQ-Bedtime Resistance	Group	<1	1/205	.51
	Time	6.12	1/205	**.01**
	Time2	2.75	1/205	.10
	Group*Time	<1	1/205	.50
CSHQ-Sleep Anxiety	Group	<1	1/202	.33
	Time	11.48	1/202	**.0008**
	Time2	5.81	1/202	**.02**
	Group*Time	<1	1/202	.94
CSHQ-Total Sleep Problems	Group	2.04	1/183	.16
	Time	14.36	1/183	**.0002**
	Time2	6.18	1/183	**.01**
	Group*Time	1.48	1/183	.23
MASC-Parent Report	Group	.25	1/53	.62
	Time	3.58	1/53	*.06*
	Group*Time	2.90	1/53	*.09*

ADHD-RS = ADHD Rating Scale; CSHQ = Children's Sleep Health Questionnaire; MASC = Manifest Anxiety Scale for Children.

Boldface type indicates significance at $p < .05$. Italics indicate trend level effects at $p < 0.10$.

Table S2. Summary of F-values for Treatment Effects on Resting State EEG Spectral Power.

Frequency Band	Electrode	Group	Time	Group*Time
Delta	F3	<1	<1	1.13
	F4	<1	2.5	**5.9***
	Fz	<1	<1	*2.9*
	C3	<1	<1	1
	C4	<1	1.1	1.1
	Cz	<1	<1	1
	P3	<1	<1	<1
	P4	<1	<1	1.3
	Pz	<1	<1	<1
Theta	F3	<1	<1	1
	F4	<1	2.6	**6.2***
	Fz	<1	1.1	*2.9*
	C3	<1	<1	<1
	C4	<1	<1	<1
	Cz	<1	<1	<1
	P3	<1	1.1	<1
	P4	<1	<1	<1
	Pz	<1	<1	<1
Beta 1/2	F3	<1, <1	<1, <1	<1, <1
	F4	<1, <1	2.4, 1.2	**5.2*, 6.0***
	Fz	<1, <1	<1, <1	*3.3, 3.3*
	C3	<1, 1.5	1.5, 1.9	<1, <1
	C4	<1, <1	<1, <1	<1, <1
	Cz	<1, 1	<1, <1	<1, <1
	P3	<1, 1	2.6, 2.2	<1, <1
	P4	<1, <1	<1, <1	<1, <1
	Pz	<1, 1.7	<1, <1	<1, <1
Gamma 1, 2	F3	<1, <1	<1, <1	<1, <1
	F4	<1, <1	1.4, 1.2	**7.1**, 6.5****
	Fz	<1, <1	<1, <1	**4***, *3.8*
	C3	1.2, <1	1.1, <1	1.2
	C4	<1, <1	<1, <1	1, <1

	Cz	1.6, 1.9	<1, <1	1.2, 1.1
	P3	2, 2.2	1.3, <1	<1, <1
	P4	<1, <1	<1, <1	1.6, 1
	Pz	3.5, *3.7*	<1, <1	<1, <1

Note: F=Frontal, C=Central, P=Parietal, Delta=1-3 hertz [Hz], Theta=4-7 hertz (Hz), Beta 1=13-16 Hz, Beta 2=17-25 Hz, Gamma 1=30-40 Hz, Gamma 2=40-50 Hz. For all analyses, degrees of freedom = 1, 47-70. No significant effects were found in the alpha band. Boldface type indicates significance *$p < 0.05$, **$p<0.01$ Italics indicate trend level effects at $p < 0.10$.

Table S3. Correlations Between Resting-state EEG Power and ADHD Behaviors.

Electrode	***Frequency Band***	**Correlation with Visit 4 ADHD-RS Scores**		
		Inattentive	**Hyperactive/Impulsive**	**Total**
F4	Delta	-0.266	-0.319	**-0.35[a]**
F4	Theta	-0.252	**-0.38[a]**	**-0.38[a]**
F4	Beta 1	-0.254	**-0.34[a]**	**-0.36[a]**
F4	Beta 2	-0.261	**-0.36[a]**	**-0.37[a]**
F4	Gamma 1	-0.229	-0.31	-0.33
F4	Gamma 2	-0.218	-0.30	-0.31
Fz	Gamma 1	-0.183	**-0.41[a]**	**-0.37[a]**
				[a] = p < .05.

Boldface type indicates significance at $p < .05$.

Table S4. Spontaneously Reported Adverse Events (AEs).

Adverse Event	Participants Reporting [n (%)]	
	Active (n=32)	Sham (n=30)
Anxiety		1 (3)
Bronchitis	1 (3)	
Headache	3 (9)	1 (3)
Itching	1 (3)	
Lightheaded	1 (3)	
Mouth pain		1 (3)
Nausea	1 (3)	
Nightmares		1 (3)
Poor appetite	1 (3)	
Rash	1 (3)	
Rhinitis	2 (6)	2 (6)
Skin whitening/discoloration	1 (3)	1 (3)
Stomachache	2 (6)	1 (3)
Tooth pain	1 (3)	
Upper Respiratory Infection	3 (9)	3 (10)
Vomiting	1 (3)	
Wrist sprain		1 (3)

All AE's were mild to moderate in clinical significance. There were no Serious Adverse Events (SAEs).