

Update of Neurostimulation for Refractory Epilepsy: Deep Brain Stimulation and Responsive Neurostimulation

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Abstract

Over the past decade, rapid advances in the application of neurostimulation to refractory epilepsy have taken place. Alongside conventional extracranial stimulation such as vagus nerve stimulation, intracranial neurostimulation is becoming the mainstream of treatment. Regarding treatment response, large-scale randomized controlled studies with long-term follow-up have revealed that anterior thalamic nucleus deep brain stimulation (ATN-DBS) and responsive neurostimulation (RNS) can both achieve nearly 50% reductions in seizure frequency for specific types of refractory epilepsy. As for safety, compared to general epilepsy patients, no significant increase in depression, status epilepticus, suicide, or sudden death were noted. Here we discuss the evolution of these two types of intracranial stimulation, summarize the latest research results, and conclude with a review of currently unresolved issues.

Key Words: refractory epilepsy, deep brain stimulation (DBS), responsive neurostimulation (RNS)

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神經刺激術於治療頑固性癲癇之最新發展—— 深腦刺激術與反應性神經刺激術

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摘要

神經刺激術 (Neurostimulation) 於頑固性癲癇的應用，於近十年來快速發展。除了行之已久的顱外刺激術譬如迷走神經刺激術 (Vagus nerve stimulation, VNS)，目前顱內刺激術躍昇主流。在療效方面，長期追蹤的大規模隨機對照研究指出，雙側視丘前核深腦刺激術 (Anterior thalamic nucleus deep brain stimulation, ATN-DBS) 以及反應性神經刺激術 (Responsive neurostimulation, RNS)，對特定頑固性癲癇，皆可降低約五成左右的癲癇發作頻率。在安全性方面，不論是接受 ATN-DBS 或 RNS，患者出現憂鬱、重積癲癇、自殺、或猝死的百分比，與未接受手術之相對應患者相比，無明顯增加趨勢。本文重點介紹此兩類顱內神經刺激術的歷史脈絡，綜合整理最新的學術成果，並於文末點出現行未解之處。

關鍵詞：頑固性癲癇 (refractory epilepsy)，深腦刺激術 (deep brain stimulation, DBS)，反應性神經刺激術 (responsive neurostimulation, RNS)

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序論

根據統計，癲癇的盛行率約占全球人口的 1%，在台灣則為 0.59%，換算起來全台約十五萬人受癲癇發作所苦^(1,2)，而其中約莫三分之一的病患屬於所有藥物都治療無效的「頑固性癲癇」。以最常見的顱葉癲癇患者為例，接受藥物或手術治療一年後，經手術治療之患者約 58% 可達到發作時完全不影響意識狀況

(free of seizures impairing awareness)，而經積極之藥物治療患者則僅有 8%⁽³⁾。由此可知，即使接受積極的抗癲癇藥物治療，仍有部分癲癇族群未見顯著改善。

藥物治療無效的頑固性癲癇患者可以考慮手術治療，方法有二⁽⁴⁾：

1. 手術治療：

分隔左右大腦半球的分隔手術，例如胼胝體切開

術、多處軟腦膜下橫切術 (multiple subpial transection, MST)，如今較少執行；另外，僅三分之二的頑固性癲癇患者適合切除癲癇病灶的切除性手術治療，原因不外乎為找不到腦內的癲癇病灶，或是病灶切除後會產生嚴重且永久性的認知或運動功能損傷。為了更精確的定位病灶，發展出顱內腦波偵測儀 (intracranial EEG, iEEG)，在硬腦膜下 (subdural) 或腦膜表面 (epidural) 放置柵狀電極 (grid electrode)，或將導線刺入腦組織內進行探測的深度電極 (depth electrode)，整體敏感度在 78~92%，但也並非百分之百找到病灶確切位置^(5,6)。

2. 神經刺激術 (neurostimulation) 或神經調控術 (neuromodulation)：

神經刺激術廣泛用於各類神經疾病的治療歷史悠久，大致可分成下述兩大類⁽⁷⁾。

- (1) 顱外 (extracranial) 電刺激術：使用電量較少，不用開顱手術，包含迷走神經刺激術 (Vagus nerve stimulation, VNS)^(8,9)，脊髓刺激術 (spinal cord stimulation, SCS)、經皮腦刺激術 (subcutaneous brain stimulation)、跨顱磁刺激術 (transcranial magnetic stimulation, TMS)^(10,11)、三叉神經刺激術 (trigeminal nerve stimulation, TNS)^(12,13)。
- (2) 顱內 (intracranial) 電刺激術：需開顱手術，侵入性高，目前有深腦刺激術 (deep brain stimulation, DBS) 及反應性神經刺激術 (responsive stimulation, RNS) 兩種。

顱外神經刺激術

顱外神經刺激術的優點在於可視狀況開關或調整刺激強度，免除了切除手術可能造成永久性神經功能損傷的風險，亦是近二十年來 VNS (VNS Therapy Cyberonics, Houston, TX, USA) 成為治療癲癇的另一重要選擇的原因。其療效約等同一線癲癇藥物，減少癲癇發作頻率至少一半的比率達 39%，歐美衛生機關相繼於 1994 年與 1997 年核准為非藥物癲癇療法^(8,9,14-16)。常用的 VNS 電極參數為：1.5 至 2.25 mA，20 至 30 Hz，250 至 500 msec，持續 30 秒後停止 3 至 5 分鐘。

(17)

脊髓電刺激術自 1967 年開始廣泛應用在慢性頑固性神經痛的治療⁽¹⁸⁾，近來則有探討電刺激頸椎背柱 (dorsal column) 減少癲癇的動物研究發表，但尚未有明確發表的人體研究⁽¹⁹⁾。

跨顱磁刺激術 (TMS) 從 1980 年代發展至今，於癲癇領域的臨床應用包含癲癇藥物的療效偵測、非侵入性癲癇區定位及頑固性癲癇的治療；小規模研究發現，對於表淺病灶的癲癇，TMS 存在顯著療效⁽²⁰⁾。

三叉神經刺激術 (TNS) 在頑固性癲癇的治療有小型的雙盲 (double-blinded) 隨機對照研究追蹤一年後，約可減少 30% 的癲癇發作⁽¹²⁾。

顱外神經刺激術雖然不需開顱手術，但 VNS 和 SCS 的電擊影響範圍較廣，容易產生非預期的副作用，TMS 則對於病灶較深的癲癇患者無法提供治療，顱內刺激術遂成為眾人研究之重心。

顱內神經刺激術

歷史上首次有計劃性的以顱內電刺激術治療癲癇病患始於 1972 年，Irving Cooper 進行了 33 例小腦前蚓部 (anterior vermis) 和周邊小腦皮質 (lateral cerebellar cortex) 的電刺激，33 位病患中有 18 位病患的癲癇發作頻率減少 50% 以上⁽²¹⁻²³⁾。

目前為止，針對頑固性癲癇的治療，除了 VNS 外，實證等級為 Class IA 唯二的神經刺激術，就是針對雙側視丘前核之深腦刺激術 (Anterior thalamic nucleus deep brain stimulation, 簡稱 ATN-DBS)，以及針對癲癇原發處 (seizure foci) 作用、稱做封閉迴路電刺激術 (closed-loop stimulation) 的反應性神經刺激術 (responsive neurostimulation, RNS)。DBS 使用單側或雙側深部電極，尖端放電處置於腦深部神經核，以設定的程式發出週期性的電刺激，其屬於開放迴路系統 (open-loop stimulation)，也就是說，不論病患的癲癇發作與否，均提供規律且持續的電擊。RNS 系統則是當偵測到異常癲癇腦波時，才發出預設的電刺激訊號產生效用，屬於後期發展出來的封閉迴路系統 (closed-loop stimulation)。

深腦刺激術 (DBS) 的目標選擇

1980 年代起，電刺激術的研究目標逐漸擴展，各種刺激部位各有其理論假說，也各有成功或無效的例子。從動物實驗可知，所有參數當中，以刺激頻率 (frequency) 影響療效最大⁽²⁴⁾，其他決定因子包括：給予的頻率高低、連續性 (continuous) 或間歇性 (periodic) 刺激、電量大小、電量或電流恆定、雙極性局部 (bipolar local) 刺激或廣域性參考電位 (wide-field referential) 刺激，以及刺激是自動化給予還是反應性 (responsive) 刺激，但以上結論並不能直接對應到人體。

電刺激術電極置放的目標廣泛，早期常用的區域有小腦、丘腦前核 (anterior thalamic nucleus, ATN)、中央丘腦 (centromedian thalamus, CM)、海馬迴 (hippocampus) 等處。其他區域包括尾狀核 (caudate)、丘腦下核 (subthalamic nucleus, STN)、運動皮質 (motor cortex) 也較常見。視丘的中央內側核 (centromedian nucleus) 被認為對全身性 (generalized) 癲癇的效果比局部性 (partial) 癲癇好⁽²⁵⁾；而絕大多數的複雜局部癲癇 (complex partial seizure) 之病灶常見於在海馬迴及其周圍的皮質構造，對於已有顛葉硬化症的病患來說亦有療效，且刺激雙側似乎比單側刺激療效更好^(26,27)。

有零星幾個的小規模個案報告使用的區域包括藍斑核 (locus coeruleus)^(28,29)、黑質網狀部 (substantia nigra pars reticulata)⁽³⁰⁾、胼胝體 (corpus callosum)⁽³¹⁾、未定帶尾側核 (caudal zona incerta)⁽³²⁾、蒼白球 (globus pallidus interna)⁽³³⁾ 等。其中，刺激視丘前核 (anterior thalamic nucleus, ATN) 為當今的主流大宗。

ATN 屬於 Papez 迴路 (Papez circuit) 的一環，始於海馬迴的 fornix，經松果體、丘腦前核、cingulate gyrus、cingulum bundle 和 entorhinal cortex，而後返回海馬迴，一般認為情緒反應及癲癇波的傳遞與此迴路有關。大多數的局部性癲癇 (partial seizure) 都有 mesial temporal lobe 或 mesial frontal lobe 的參與，但因松果體靠近顛底，電極擺放位置若失準便可能損傷 Willis circle 造成出血。有鑑於此，丘腦前核便成為電極位置絕佳的目標。

深腦刺激術 (Deep brain stimulation, DBS)

近二十年來，DBS 在動作障礙疾病如巴金森氏症 (Parkinson's disease)、原發性顫抖症 (essential tremor) 和肌張力障礙症 (dystonia) 的成功核准並推廣，讓 DBS 在癲癇領域發展的機會再起。歷來各研究的電流參數設定與刺激位置不盡相同，療效亦各有不同，統整如表一所示。常用的電極參數為 5 V、145 Hz、90 msec、放電 1 分鐘併暫停 5 分鐘⁽¹⁵⁾。其中幾個無對照組 (non-controlled)、無雙盲 (non-blinded) 的先驅研究發現，使用 ATN-DBS 的患者其癲癇發作頻率比原本減少 53~70% 之多^(34,35)。

有關 ATN-DBS 最大規模的研究始於 2008 年，由 Medtronic 公司贊助的 SANTE 臨床試驗 (Stimulation of the Anterior Nucleus of the Thalamus for Epilepsy, SANTE) 為一多中心 (multicenter)、隨機分派 (randomized)、含對照組 (controlled) 之臨床試驗，針對 110 位局部性癲癇的成人患者，實施雙側視丘前核之 DBS (ATN-DBS)，分成開機和未開機 (作對照組) 兩組，並比較裝設前後三個月的發作頻率⁽¹⁵⁾。全程參與的受試者共 86 位 (各 43 位)，在裝設刺激器後間隔一個月的手術回復期間，癲癇發作已減少 20%，而開機組下降 40.4%，未開機組僅下降 14.5%，兩者呈顯著差異。第四個月後，所有受試者均為開機組，追蹤五年期內，癲癇造成的外傷次數變少，所有患者發作頻率中位數的百分比約減少 68%，有 19% 的患者從此不再有癲癇發作，也有高達 75% 的受試者願意繼續使用 DBS 治療。44.5% 的受試者曾接受過 VNS 治療，24.5% 曾接受過傳統手術治療，ATN-DBS 對這類患者仍可產生療效^(36,37)。

封閉迴路電刺激術 (Closed-loop neurostimulation)

封閉迴路之 DBS 無法配合癲癇發作頻率改變刺激時間，若採用封閉迴路刺激術，意味著機器可在癲癇發作時才給予電刺激，不僅確保療效，尚能減少副作用並延長使用年限⁽³⁸⁾。除了本文重點所在、治療頑固

表一：常用刺激之腦區的深腦刺激術（DBS）研究

刺激部位	研究	人數	試驗設計	癲癇種類	結果（癲癇發作頻率）
視丘前核 (anterior thalamic nucleus)	Fisher ⁽¹⁴⁾	110	雙盲 (Double blind)	Partial onset	減少 68% ; 19% seizure free
	Lim ⁽⁶⁶⁾	4	非盲 (Open label)	3 partial onset, one generalized onset	減少 49.6% ; 一位 Complete remission
	Osorio ⁽⁶⁷⁾	4	非盲	Mesio-temporal epilepsy	減少 75%
	Andrade ⁽⁶⁸⁾	6	非盲	不分	2 位顯著減少
	Kerrigan ⁽⁶⁹⁾	5	非盲	Partial epilepsy	4 位顯著減少
視丘中央內側核 (centromedian nucleus of thalamus)	Valentin ⁽⁷⁰⁾	11	單盲 (Single blind)	Refractory generalized or frontal lobe epilepsy	全身性發作者減少 50% 以 上；frontal lobe epilepsy 則無此效果
	Velasco ⁽⁷¹⁾	13	非盲	Lennox-Gastaut	減少 80%
	Chkhenkeli ⁽⁶⁵⁾	15	非盲	Mesiotemporal epilepsy	減少 40-80%
	Fisher ⁽⁷²⁾	7	雙盲	Generalized onset	Tonic-clonic seizure activities 顯著減少
視丘下核 (subthalamic nucleus)	Handforth ⁽⁷³⁾	2	非盲	不分	減少 33-54%
	Chabardes ⁽⁷⁴⁾	5	非盲	不分	減少 1-80%
小腦 (cerebellum)	Velasco ⁽⁷⁵⁾	5	雙盲	Generalized onset	減少 0-33%
	Davis & Emmonds ⁽⁷⁶⁾	27	非盲	不分	23 位病患顯著減少
	Wright ⁽⁷⁷⁾	12	雙盲	不分	無顯著差別
	Cooper ⁽⁷⁸⁾	15	非盲	不分	10 位顯著減少
海馬迴 (hippocampus)	Boon ⁽⁷⁹⁾	10	非盲	Unilateral temporal lobe onset	減少 30-90%
	Tellez-Zenteno ⁽⁸⁰⁾	4	雙盲	Mesial temporal epilepsy	減少 15%
	Velasco ⁽²⁵⁾	9	非盲	Bilateral temporal onset	減少 85%

性癲癇的 RNS 之外，封閉迴路亦逐漸推廣至以下領域⁽³⁸⁾：

1. Spinal cord stimulation (SCS) 治療慢性疼痛：可配合病患身體姿勢變化而調整刺激強弱⁽⁴⁰⁻⁴²⁾。
2. Deep brain stimulation (DBS) 治療巴金森氏症的顫抖：偵測顫抖的程度或視丘下核 (subthalamic nucleus) 的神經訊號做為生物指標，調整電極參數以增強症狀控制，並減少 DBS 對語言、步行的副作用⁽⁴³⁻⁴⁷⁾。
3. Vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) 治療頑固性癲癇：當預兆 (aura) 出現或症狀剛發生時，封閉迴路系統之 VNS 可以磁鐵感應，由病患或家屬啟動刺激

⁽⁴⁸⁻⁵⁰⁾，但病患極少能於發作時自己使用，因此，偵測癲癇發作時連帶的心搏過速成了另一可行的目標^(51,52)。

4. Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) 治療癲癇⁽⁵³⁾：反應性穿顱磁刺激術在動物實驗可減少癲癇波的數量與持續時間，人體試驗則尚無證據，但治療深度淺，未來應用性未明。

反應性神經刺激術 (Responsive neurostimulation, RNS)

RNS 的前身最早始於 1999 年，Lesser 等人在切

除手術中給予異常放電之腦皮質一短暫電刺激後，發現可縮短異常腦波的傳播⁽⁵⁴⁾，其他人也應證了這個現象^(55,56)。Kossoff 等人於 2004 年使用硬腦膜下電極持續地分析腦波、偵測癲癇波並給予電刺激，則開啓了之後大規模研究的先河⁽⁵⁷⁾。

RNS 系統的皮質電極安置在癲癇病灶附近的腦區表面，深部電極插入產生癲癇病灶的腦區 (parenchyma)，兩條電極都可偵測腦波或給予刺激，電池本體則安置在部分頭骨切除後的空間中⁽³⁸⁾。採封閉迴路系統的 RNS，偵測到異常放電之腦波時才會放電，若病患自覺有癲癇發作時亦可用磁鐵感應啟動刺激，不僅延長電池使用年限，亦減少電刺激伴隨的副作用。常用的電極參數分布較為廣泛，概略在 0.5 至 12 mA、1 至 333 Hz、40 至 1,000 msec 之間⁽⁵⁸⁾，絕大多數病患一天當中累積的刺激時間不超過五分鐘⁽⁵⁹⁾。

一大規模多院隨機對照組實驗指出，針對兩百三十位頑固性局部性癲癇的患者，經過平均 5.4 年的追蹤發現，NeuroPace RNS 的療效於第一年約可減少癲癇發作頻率達 44%，第二年則上昇到 53%，第三至六年間則保有 44~66% 的下降幅度；不僅生活功能獲得改善，也不會增加精神症狀或情緒問題⁽⁶⁰⁻⁶²⁾。

值得一提的是，療效顯著的 RNS，不適用在癲癇病灶超過 2 個或病灶未明之頑固性局部性癲癇患者。就癲癇波偵測方面，臨床醫師雖可調整敏感度、專一度與時間長度等參數，但偽陽性或偽陰性的辨別仍待提升^(38,63-65)。此外，安裝 RNS 系統的病人，現行仍不建議接受核磁共振造影檢查 (Magnetic Resonance Imaging, MRI)。

顱內神經刺激術的副作用

1. 深腦刺激術 (DBS)

DBS 的安全性數據多由動作障礙病患身上獲得，產生腦部「無症狀的小出血 (asymptomatic intracerebral hemorrhage)」或梗塞為 1.2%，整體副作用比率為 6.5%；VNS、RNS 或 DBS 在癲癇患者的副作用比率則為 1-2%^(36,37)。

DBS 裝置最常見副作用為植入處疼痛 (23.6%, 20.9%/5 年)；22.7% 的癲癇病患在胸口電池植入處會

感覺搔癢、震動或電麻等感覺異常，比率與動作障礙患者族群相當；有些接受視丘前核刺激的患者主觀上有憂鬱 (32.7%/5 年) 與記憶變差 (25.5%/5 年) 的情形，但神經心理學檢查 (neuropsychological test) 在有無接受 DBS 的癲癇患者之間並無差異，甚至在注意力 (attention) 和執行功能 (executive function) 上有裝 DBS 的患者反而有更好的表現，推測是間接刺激雙側的額葉-邊緣系統迴路 (fronto-limbic circuits) 造成⁽³⁷⁾。

2. 反應性神經刺激術 (RNS)

與裝置 DBS 的動作障礙病患、或藥物治療的頑固性癲癇病患相比，RNS 的各項副作用例如植入物感染 (9.4%)、複雜性局部癲癇 (complex partial seizure) 發作增加 (7.8%)、更加嚴重的全身性大發作 (4.8%)、猝死 (4.3%)、自殺意圖 (2.7%) 等方面的比率相似，開機組與關機組 (sham group) 狀態下的副作用亦無顯著差別⁽⁶⁶⁾。

綜合來看，接受 ATN-DBS 或 RNS 的癲癇患者，出現憂鬱、重積式癲癇、自殺、猝死的百分比，與未接受手術之相對應患者相比，無明顯增加的趨勢。^(37, 60)

結語

二至三種抗癲癇藥物治療仍無效的頑固性癲癇患者，或針對藥物交互作用繁多的老年族群，可考慮非藥物治療，而神經刺激術避免了傳統切除或分隔手術的不可逆性。神經刺激術可分顱內與顱外兩大類，實證等級為 Class IA 者包括行之有年的迷走神經刺激術外，尚有近年來蓬勃發展之視丘前核深腦刺激術 (ATN-DBS)，以及反應性神經刺激術 (RNS) 這兩種選項。療效方面，RNS 約減少四至六成的局部性癲癇發作⁽⁵⁹⁻⁶¹⁾，ATN-DBS 則有五至七成的療效^(34,35)。兩者均顯著改善病患生活品質，也不會增加憂鬱、自殺、猝死等副作用之發生率^(36,59)。其他異同之處包括：RNS 採封閉迴路系統，ATN-DBS 採開放式；現行 RNS 與 MRI 仍不相容，DBS 在關機後則無此問題。

有鑑於顯著的療效及相對安全的副作用，美國食品衛生管理局 (FDA) 於 2013 年 2 月核准通過 RNS 系統

(RNS System, NeuroPace, Mountain View, CA, USA) 用於治療癲癇病灶不超過兩處的頑固性局部性癲癇患者。歐盟於2010年，澳洲、加拿大於2012年起，核准DBS在頑固性癲癇的治療，但美國與我國衛生署至今尚未准許。

顱內電刺激術在癲癇領域仍存在許多未解的問題，其中大家最感興趣的問題如下：VNS、RNS及DBS三者之間直接比較，哪個療效好？刺激部位是否可對治療局部或廣泛性的發作？單獨使用DBS以及合併藥物控制或合併手術治療對治療癲癇的效益有何不同？除了開放性的迴路刺激，封閉性迴路刺激的DBS是否也有效果？如何提高封閉迴路對癲癇腦波之偵測率？以上這些問題都有賴更進一步的大型試驗，以及更嚴格的試驗條件控制來釐清，以造福更多頑固性癲癇病患。

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