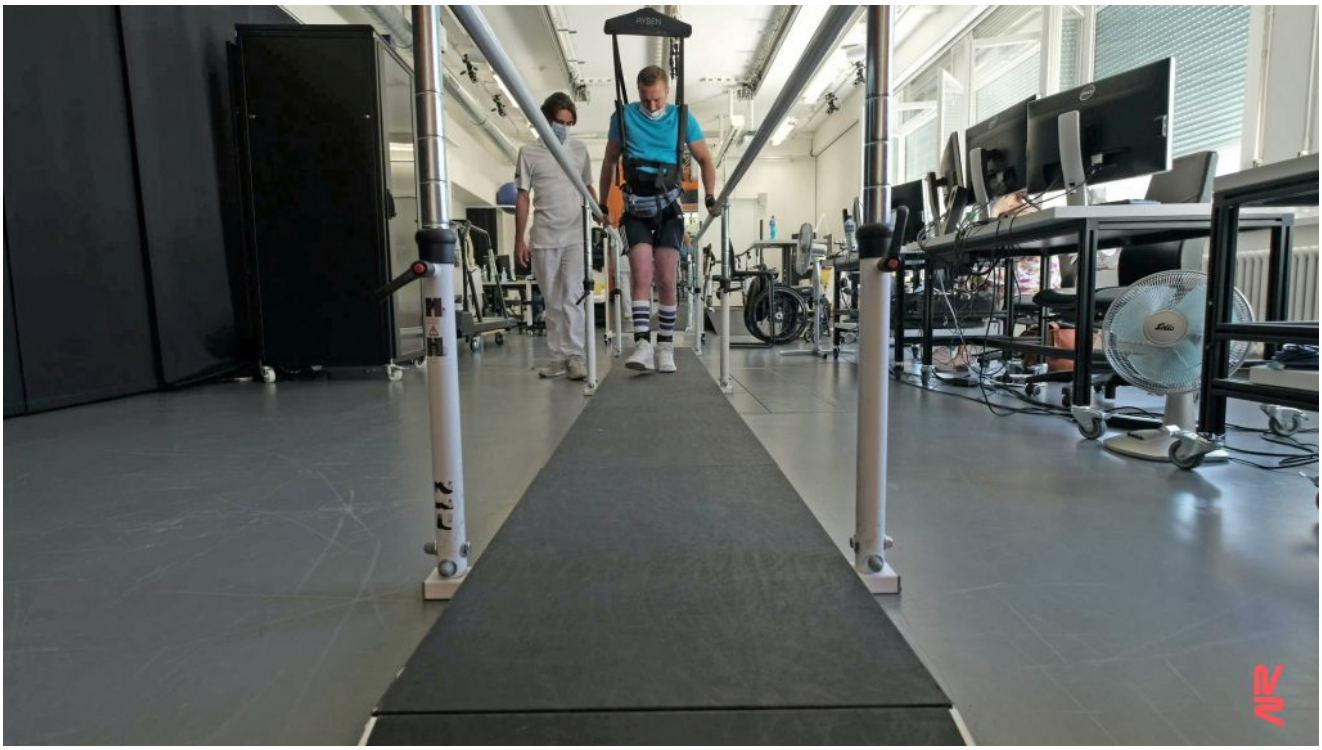
HEALTHY NEWS

Groundbreaking: Paralyzed Patients Walk & Swim again after Receiving a Spinal Cord Implant

By bestfolkmedicine · 11/02/2022 · 2 min read



Our spine is pivotal for our mobility because it connects to the brain and the nervous system throughout the whole body.

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For example, to move our legs, a signal goes from the motor cortex of the brain through the spinal cord to the legs' muscles.

With this in mind, when the spine is injured, this communication is impeded and may lead to paralysis. However, this team of scientists may offer the chance for paralyzed individuals to regain their mobility.

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In the study, they've developed a special implant that's placed into the spine and fixes the lost connection. As explained in *Nature Medicine*, this implant quickly restored the movement in the paralyzed patients.

Spinal Cord Implant Helps Paralyzed Individuals Regain Mobility

Nine individuals got the device and each of them was entirely paralyzed in their legs due to a spinal injury. The researchers placed multielectrode paddle leads into their spine and attached the electronics to their nerves.

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The EES technique was controlled by a computer and was then employed. Their brain started sending the signal southwards where the implant boosted or replicated them through computer programming.

These signals are strong enough to encourage muscle movement. Without the implant, they would be very weak or non-existent because of the injury in their spines.

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According to the author of the study, Gregoire Courtine, the new and soft implant is designed to be put underneath the vertebrae onto the spinal cord. These implants modulate the neurons that regulate the muscle groups.

By controlling these implants, the researchers activated the spinal cord like a brain would naturally do it so that a person can stand, walk, swim, or ride a bike. The participants could do this within 24 hours of the implant's activation.

Does This Mean That Paralysis Will Be Curable?

Despite its revolutionary nature, this implant is far from a cure and isn't widespread currently. But, it's groundbreaking that these men regained their mobility.

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One of them, Michel Roccati, who injured his spine in a motorcycle accident and his legs were left paralyzed said that he can now walk again. He stands up, walks where he wants, and it's all normal like it was before the accident.

The first who got the implant, David M'zee says he was able to conceive a child with his wife and has been walking with his infant daughter again.

Although not used in everyday life yet, this implant has made a stunning improvement in the lives of the recipients. It remains to be seen how it will develop in the future and how it will help other paralyzed individuals.

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