

New Movement In Treating Paralysis

(NAPSA)—If you or someone you care for is ever among the nearly 2 million Americans living with spinal cord injury, recent research could mean good news for you.

There's been a significant breakthrough therapy for individuals living with spinal cord injury. The once inconceivable notion that a damaged spinal cord could be repaired is closer to reality, report researchers from UCLA and the University of Louisville in the medical journal *Brain*.

New Hope

As a result of epidural stimulation of the lower spinal cord, four young men who were paralyzed for years were able to voluntarily move their legs and bear weight. Even more revolutionary, the participants experienced significant improvements with autonomic functions—including bladder, bowel and sexual control—an unprecedented breakthrough for the field. Temperature regulation and cardiovascular and respiratory functions also improved.

Epidural Stimulation Explained

Epidural stimulation involves applying electrical current to specific parts of the spinal cord. This mimics signals the brain normally transmits to re-engage the spine's neural network and initiate movement.

The Big Idea

"While we hoped that epidural stimulation would facilitate movement for individuals with complete paralysis, the autonomic recovery was an accidental discovery, but a quantum leap toward reversing the most devastating and life-threatening complications of a spinal cord injury," said Peter Wilderotter, president and CEO of



The first promising therapy to demonstrate how a damaged spinal cord may be repaired has been discovered.

the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation.

The Reeve Foundation created The Big Idea campaign to raise \$15 million to fund the next phase of research and bring this potentially life-changing therapy to individuals living with spinal cord injury and possibly other neuromuscular disorders, such as stroke, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's. The money raised will fund a five-year study of more participants who will be implanted and trained, as well as evaluated post-intervention.

"Epidural stimulation has challenged what it means to be diagnosed with a complete injury and confirmed that recovery is possible even years following trauma. The Big Idea is a culmination of decades of basic science and the commitment of researchers to advance promising therapies," said Susan Harkema, Ph.D., principal investigator on The Big Idea study, University of Louisville professor.

Learn More

For further facts, including how you can be part of the solution, visit www.reevebigidea.org and www.ChristopherReeve.org or call (800) 225-0292.