

European Initiative Spearheads Medical Advances

Marci Lelliott:

It's a jet ski, it's my favourite thing in the whole world, I have to say, and any chance I get to go out on the water, we go out into Poole harbour and out into the ocean. I can jump waves, I can do all sorts of things, and it makes me very happy.

Voice-over 1:

After surviving a stroke at the age of twelve, Marci Lelliott was left paralysed on one side. Today she lives an active life, works as a teacher of disabled children and is gradually getting movement back into her left hand.

John Spensley:

We've developed an implant that goes into the forearm, where two sets of electrodes are attached to muscle bundles, nerve bundles, which operate two functions; the first function is to extend the wrist, and the second function is to open the fingers.

Voice-over 1:

The implant in Marci's forearm is powered and controlled wirelessly by the removable box strapped over it. Like the activity monitor, the STIMuGRIP system uses accelerometers to detect its position. A specific arm movement triggers electrical stimulation of muscles and nerves to open and close the wrist and fingers. Marci has become one of the first patients to use the newly developed device.

Paul Taylor:

Up until this point there has been very little that has been able to be done for the upper limb in stroke. To a large extent it's been ignored by the medical profession, and people had just been left to get on with it. We now have a possibility of offering a new treatment, er, for people who have not been able to use their hands, and this really is a first.

Voice-over 1:

The device has several programmed modes to control or exercise the wrist in different situations.

Marci Lelliott:

You can feel the implant if you press it, it's quite lumpy, erm, but you can't see it, apart from the scar you can't actually see it. Um, when the electricity is actually going through into the arm, it just feels a bit like pins and needles, really, but not nasty, you kind of get used to it, it's just a bit of a sort of tingle. The Healthy Aims project is very exciting for me, and just to be involved in something... um, for stroke patients, and if... you know, if it helps me then great, but it will help people in the future.

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