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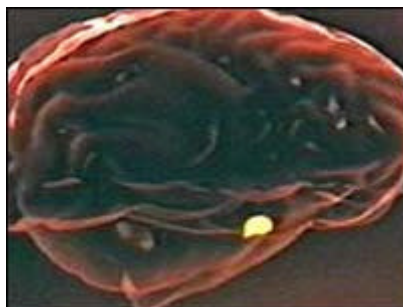
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'Drug gave me back my life'

Jane Elliott

BBC News Online health staff

Two years ago Henry Webb was unable to walk more than a few hundred yards, he suffered almost constant pain and was unable to sleep.



Henry Webb's life has been transformed

Doctors diagnosed him with Parkinson's disease and his future looked bleak.

But then he was accepted onto an innovative new trial, which he believes has transformed his life.

Now Henry, 64, is able to walk miles each day, eat his own food and has even taken up playing bowls.

'I just love it'

Doctors at Bristol's Frenchay Hospital recruited Henry and another four people with advanced Parkinson's disease onto their trial.

They pumped a growth factor called glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor (GDNF) into his brain and noticed remarkable results.

He said: "I just love it. My friends are all over the moon with my progress, they keep saying how marvellous it is and how they have not seen anything like this before.

"A lot of people I know with Parkinson's are going downhill fast and that is what I was worried about."

“ I did not expect the treatment to work as well as it has

Henry Webb

Henry's first symptoms were a pain in his back and doctors initially diagnosed a trapped nerve, but more tests quickly showed that he had Parkinson's.

Eight years after his diagnosis, Henry was invited to take part in the trial and said he had not looked back since.

"I did not expect the treatment to work as well as it has.

"Now I can walk a lot better and I can climb up steps. All the pain has gone and I can get to sleep now. I even play bowls.

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I love it, although I do still get the shakes down one side.

"But now I can use a knife and fork and can walk for miles and miles."

Henry said he hoped that other patients with Parkinson's, including celebrity sufferers like Mohammed Ali and Michael J Fox, would soon get the chance to try the new treatment.

"I hope we can do it for them," he said.

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