

Parkinson's symptoms reversed in study

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U.S. scientists say they have identified a key biological pathway that, when obstructed, causes Parkinson's disease symptoms.

The researchers at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research in Cambridge, Mass., working in collaboration with colleagues at several research centers including the University of Missouri, say they also figured out how to repair that pathway and restore normal neurological function in certain animal models.

"For the first time we've been able to repair dopaminergic neurons, the specific cells that are damaged in Parkinson's disease," said Whitehead scientist Susan Lindquist, also a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator.

More than 1 million U.S. citizens suffer from Parkinson's disease and that number that is expected to soar during the next few decades as the population ages. No current therapies alter the fundamental clinical course of the condition.

Lindquist was senior author of the study that appears in the journal *Science*.

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