

Deep brain stimulation offers new hope for dystonia treatment

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Dystonia, a group of diseases that cause a patient's muscles to involuntarily contract with movement, has had a relatively limited and ineffective number of treatments in the past. New research shows that a recently developed surgical treatment, deep brain stimulation (an off switch for the brain), has provided dramatic benefits in some patients.

A new study, published in *Neuromodulation*, has confirmed that preliminary evidence regarding this new treatment is more effective for certain types of dystonia than other treatments used in the past. It has relieved the symptoms that sometimes force patients into painful, involuntary postures.

"We knew from early studies that a certain type dystonia has a dramatic response to surgery. What was not clear, prior to this study, was whether patients with other types of dystonia would also respond in a similar fashion," says Dr. Kathryn Holloway, head researcher. "This study shows that many forms of dystonia did respond well to the new treatment," she continued.

Source: Blackwell Publishing

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