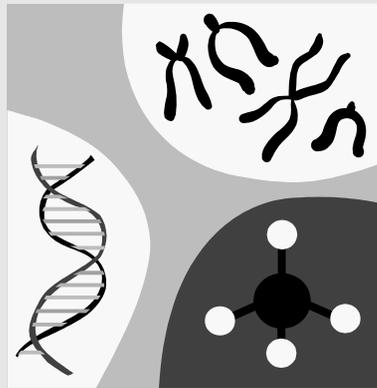


Stem Cell Research

A UK company is taking a lead in the exciting area of stem cell research and development. ReNeuron has presented ground-breaking efficacy data with its lead stem cell line at the American Neurological Association Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada.



The company has generated important and unique data using ReN001, a stable human brain stem cell line which was derived from the cortex region of the brain and was selected for testing in a validated rat model of stroke. Injection of the cells into the damaged brain significantly improved sensory motor abilities impaired by the

stroke.

ReNeuron hopes to have approval to commence clinical trials by the end of 2005, initially in patients who have suffered long-term disabilities after stroke.

These breakthrough results clearly demonstrate the ability of ReN001 to treat serious brain damage; the wider significance is that this cell line has been developed in a manner that will permit its scale-up and eventual clinical use, subject to approval.

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**CAN YOU HELP
DIFFERENT STROKES?**

SEE PAGE 11

My Dad's had a brain injury!

Different Strokes is frequently asked for support for children of stroke survivors to help them come to terms with the effects that having a stroke has on the parent, the family and the children themselves.

There is now a booklet available from Headway, the brain injury association, that fulfils this purpose. The booklet contains information and advice to help explain what happens when someone has a brain injury, taking the child through the causes and effects of brain injuries and the path the parent might take through the hospital at different stages of treatment.

Medical terms are printed in bold type and there is assistance with pronunciation and a glossary of terms. There are also references to how the child may feel about what is happening to the parent, and ways to cope with the changes in their life. It addresses issues such as feelings of sadness, anger and embarrassment in a matter-of-fact way so that children realise they are not alone in having these emotions.

If you would like a copy, it is available by calling the Headway helpline, which is **0808 800 2244**, or from their website: www.headway.org.uk. Cost: £4.00.



Congratulations!

Peter Knox spent the sixth anniversary of his stroke on Mount Everest. He spent 15 days trekking to Base Camp at 19,200 feet above sea level and back.

Peter said "Well I made it to Everest Base Camp but it was very tough. It's all been worth it though because I've raised £7,500 for Different Strokes. They helped me so much after my stroke that now I want to help them."

Thank you Peter for supporting Different Strokes once again.



Peter at Everest Base Camp

If only.....?

If only could stand and walk
 If I could use a knife and fork
 In my right hand I suppose
 Would be able to scratch my nose
 And may be I could write
 And even get it right.

If only I could understand
 I have really not lost command
 Of things and find a way
 I'll be all right some day
 And realize in spite of strife
 It really isn't a bad old life.

**A collection of Poems
by Ron Page**

Who sadly passed away at Woodlands
 Nursing Home, Staines January 1999

The Stroke

At a stroke it came to pass
 I was left mostly on my "arse"
 With no satisfaction
 From my armless reaction
 An offhand position
 With absolutely no volition.

There came to me a certainty
 That I should review my mobility
 Then provided with a wheelchair
 I felt that I was getting there
 Maybe if motorized to match
 I might scorch around Brands Hatch.

This may be an idle dream
 But much as it may seem
 It is a sign that I must think ahead
 And take a lead
 No matter what it is
 I must think positive.

Perhaps I Ought?

I am feeling better I think
 With a smile and a wink
 Maybe it's the thought
 Perhaps I ought?

Sometimes what I do wrong one day
 I can do better another way
 Maybe it's the thought
 Perhaps I ought?

If the fingers don't add up right
 Through an oversight
 Maybe it's the thought
 Perhaps I ought?

Maybe it's the season
 For a bad natured reason
 Maybe it's the thought
 Perhaps I ought?

Difference

Surely I am not a different bloke
 Since I had this stroke
 I know I cannot get around much
 And I certainly have lost my touch
 But whoever I may be
 I am surely still "me".

I have the right members in my set
 Arms and legs though a bit off net
 And in giving my command
 I have to use the other hand
 Sometimes not there quite
 Using the left hand for the right.

Still I think nowadays
 Things come around in different ways
 The world is open for everyone there
 Providing they have the right fare
 And even in the most awful places
 Somehow peace survives in phases.

42

At 39 I was fit, healthy and about to start a new career with the police, currently then working out my second year as a house husband. My years as a successful PR director and marketing man were pathetic I felt, simply because no single person benefited. So some life skills work and third time lucky it was there, just waiting for me...

I took the kids to school and then biked off to my local gym, where I regularly attended a yoga class. I had a headache, but thought it would go away else I'd have to take some pills. About an hour of the class had gone when I took off for the loos – to try and be sick! But nothing happened, until I slid down onto the floor. I lapsed in and out of consciousness, but I was in shutdown. At a later date I realised it was the manager who'd seen me, and this was the third stroke he had attended at the gym!

After waking briefly, I found myself in a ward of the hospital with my wife sitting there, and she told me I'd had a stroke. But to me at least I was alive, and that message was brought home to me the next day when I saw my two boys – and I can even remember attempting a smile!

Five months I endured hospital and the rehab unit before finally escaping. Not particularly positive, but at least I'm here. I had a dose of depression drugs, but got off them straight away. Above all else, I felt alone. Perhaps the focal point for me was seeing the video of myself and recalling everything from my PR days – I woke up then and thought 'positive' from that moment.

It was quite an acute stroke on my right hand side – no leg or arm movement and my speech was badly affected. Three years later and it's very different – I can walk unaided (I refused even a walking stick) and I have some major movement in my hand and arm, but at least my vocal chords can be substantially

better understood and my brainpower and perception has greatly improved with time.

Thankfully I had 100% eyesight, and I was determined to get back to driving and then my total independence back. I got a test cancellation date through determination, and I passed with less than six months since my stroke. I am eternally grateful that I retained



perfect eyesight – what would life be like otherwise?

I spent much time thinking 'what next?', before coming to the conclusion of 'everything'. Much of my time was taken up with sporting hobbies – mountain biking & cycling, rowing, canoeing, gym, swimming and motorcycling. The last one particularly irked me, having spent my adult life on two wheels and the majority of that being an observer for the IAM.

So a trike (motorcycle with three wheels!) did it and it flies round everywhere today. Two years later I've just suffered an accident, but what was really spooky was realising he was another young stroke survivor in the opposing vehicle!

I cycle (two wheels) everywhere (which reminds me of the tricycle I still have – email me and its yours), I cox/coach at my rowing club, I swim and go to the gym including the

rowing ergo. Running is still a long way off for me, but canoeing is the only thing left. Maybe Canadian style. My eldest (12) boy also has a motorbike now, but it's a trial bike. I'm not much use for helping him out given each trial, but the other dads do all that.

So why 42? This is the day that I've finally gotten around to it! But more importantly, it's also the answer to life, the universe and everything (read Hitchhikers Guide... if I confuse you), that's why I called myself a 'Think42' consultant pre-stroke. Double spooky.

Now I'm alive and happy, working part-time for younger stroke survivors in Hackney. I

helped set up Different Strokes in Woking (with thanks to my motorcycle club) and am now embarking on the University of Surrey research project on stroke survivor's arms (constrained – don't ask!).

What's next? I don't know but I live life day by day now. I've a couple of things to 'let go' and then lead my life to the full. I figure last year going to Italy and travelling around by train was brilliant, the highlight being Pompeii. The new highlight? Who knows!

With sincere love and thanks to my wife, Julie.

Richard Harris – had a stroke at age 39



Speakeasy is a charity based in Ramsbottom in the heart of hilly Lancashire.

Established over 22 years ago by Stephanie Holland a local speech and language therapist, Speakeasy has gone through many changes over the years and has emerged recently as a successful and purposeful centre for people who have aphasia, and their families.

At Speakeasy people can get long term help and support from the speech and language therapists and other staff. A menu of options is available to enable the members develop their communication, grow in confidence and learn new skills.

Two years ago Speakeasy established a computer suite. By linking with a computer research programme in Bristol we can provide the latest software for aphasia therapy in addition to many other computer activities.

Despite the considerable challenges of working on a split site, in a hilly town and with cobble streets outside the offices, we have a

strong determination to be a centre of excellence in the North West. We link closely with speech and language therapists, the Stroke Association, other charities, and Manchester University research projects to try to provide a more coordinated approach to the support offered across the region.

Bury Speech and Language therapy department generously funds part of Speakeasy's work. Recently extra money was found to employ someone who has aphasia as an expert patient for the benefit of local health projects. In addition we have another member of staff who has aphasia. She attended Speakeasy as a member, a volunteer, a trustee and now as a valued member of staff.

At the moment we are only open for a part of 3 days but we hope to expand in the future. Most of the people who attend Speakeasy live in the Bury area although anyone is welcome to attend if they can arrange their own travel.

We are a small charity with big ideas and a determination that Ramsbottom is known for something other than its comedy name!

If you would like to know more about Speakeasy please contact Gill Pearl, **Speakeasy, 5 Market Chambers, Ramsbottom, Bury BL0 9AJ, telephone 01706 825802.**

Salt - Watch it



When most people think of salt, they think of shaking it on their food, or adding a pinch to cooking. And it's important to try to get out of the habit of using salt in this way. But you also need to be careful about the salt you can't see.

Processed food

Three-quarters (75%) of the salt we eat comes from processed food, such as breakfast cereals, soups, sauces, ready meals and biscuits.



Almost everyone eats some processed foods. Even people who make all their own meals from scratch will usually buy foods such as bread and biscuits and these can be high in salt.

So, before you assume that you don't eat too much salt, take a look at what you're buying, as well as how you use salt at home. You don't need to stop eating high-salt foods altogether, but it's a good idea to cut down on the amount you eat. With types of food that are sometimes high in salt, take a look at the label and try to choose brands/recipes that contain less salt. Read the labels for more information.

In the UK, bread, breakfast cereals, biscuits, cakes and meat products such as bacon, sausages and ham are some of the main sources of salt in people's diet.

Some foods contain other forms of sodium, used as flavour enhancers and raising

agents, such as monosodium glutamate and sodium bicarbonate.

What types of food are high in salt?

Foods where some brands/recipes are high in salt:

Baked Beans	Cooking sauces
Breakfast Cereals	Biscuits
Hot Chocolate	Tinned spaghetti
Pizza	Tinned vegetables
Ready meals	Tinned pulses
Soup	

Less obviously salty foods:

Bacon	Soy sauce
Cheese	Smoked meat & fish
Gravy granules	Stock cubes
Pickles	Yeast extract
Sausages	

Obviously salty foods:

Anchovies	Pretzels
Crisps	Salt fish
Olives	
Salted & dry roasted peanuts	

I can't be eating too much salt because I don't add it to my food - FALSE

Food has no flavour without salt - FALSE

You can tell what foods are high in salt because they taste salty - FALSE

Only old people need to worry about how much salt they eat - FALSE

Posh salt is better for you than table salt - FALSE

You need more salt in hot climates because you sweat so much - FALSE

If I cut down on salt my body won't have enough - FALSE

I would know if I had high blood pressure - FALSE

CEREALS 4 TIMES SALTIER THAN A BAG OF PEANUTS

BIG brand cereals which are laden with sugar, salt and fat have been named and shamed by food watchdogs. Alarming, many of the worst offenders were those aimed at children. Among those highlighted were Kellogg's All-Bran, Quaker Oat Krunchies and Nestle Golden Grahams.

A single serving of these cereals contains four times the amount of salt as a 25 gram bag of roasted peanuts.



An investigation by the Consumers Association into 100 popular breakfast cereals on supermarket shelves has found the majority fail to live up to their 'healthy' image. Judged on Food

Standards Agency guidelines, 85 brands had 'a lot' of sugar. Forty per cent were found to have 'a lot' of salt and nine per cent were high in saturated fat. The report is part of a campaign to tackle the 'time-bomb' of obesity.

The Consumers Association say not enough is being done by the food industry and government to reverse the country's appalling diet. They are calling for a simple traffic light system to be introduced so consumers can

see how healthy a food is at a glance.

Nick Stace, director of communications, said: 'Breakfast cereals have a healthy image, yet our research shows that big brand manufacturers are lacing their cereals with such high levels of sugar and salt that it is no wonder we have a public health crisis on our hands. A traffic-light style labelling system allows consumers to spot at a glance which foods are good and which are bad.

'This would be a particularly good signpost to shoppers unaware that a bowl of their favourite cereal may contain more salt than four packets of roasted peanuts.' He warned: 'The Government tell us that the obesity debate is on their radar but we are concerned that this is little more than rhetoric.

More people are choosing cereal bars that can be eaten 'on the run' to save time in the morning but many of the 11 brands tested were found to be high in saturated fat. And all provided less energy and fibre than a bowl of cereal.

April 2004

By Judith Duffy, Source: Daily Record



smart snacks
little bites from the almond board of california

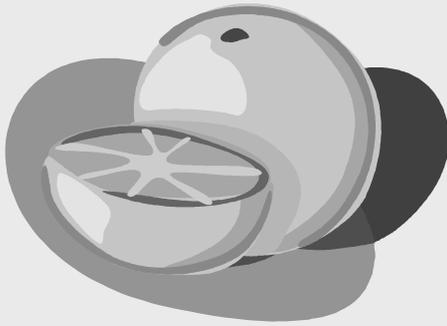
winter/spring 2004

Recent Dietary Study Including Almonds Shows 35% Drop In LDL Cholesterol in 2 Weeks

A study published in the November issue of the journal *Metabolism* shows that a certain dietary plan high in heart-healthy foods, including almonds, achieved a 35 percent decrease in LDL, or "bad," cholesterol in just two weeks.

Grapefruit warning

Eating a grapefruit each morning may have triggered a serious side effect in a woman taking the popular anticholesterol drug Zocor (simvastatin), new research suggests. Although the case involved Zocor, the authors note that similar drugs could also be influenced by grapefruit consumption.



Rhabdomyolysis, a disorder involving muscle breakdown and kidney problems, is a rare but serious side effect of drugs like Zocor, known as statins. In August 2001, drug maker Bayer AG was forced to recall its statin Baycol (cerivastatin), after the drug was linked to an excessive number of rhabdomyolysis cases.

The problem occurs because grapefruit contains a chemical that inactivates a liver enzyme involved in drug metabolism. As a result, regular consumption of grapefruit juice can lead to excessively high levels of medicine in the blood.

The grapefruit hazard is not significant for other statins, such as Lescol, Pravachol and Crestor.

As always, don't panic! If you have any concerns about prescribed medication don't stop taking it until you have consulted your GP to discuss them.

Underwear heart monitor to warn of strokes

A group of 33 firms, including Nokia & Philips, have unveiled the prototype of a portable heart monitor that would use sensors woven into underwear to warn patients before they suffer a stroke.

The system, which requires further research, keeps track of important risk factors for heart disease, such as inactivity, poor sleep & stress.

Cranberry extract may help reduce stroke damage

Natural compounds found in cranberries may protect nerve cells against damage resulting from stroke.

"This study shows that the cranberry extract is able to prevent the death of the brain cells under conditions that would produce a stroke" said Dr. Catherine C. Neto, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY
REGIONAL NEWS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH
DIFFERENT STROKES MEMBERS, SEND IT TO
info@differentstrokes.co.uk**

**DON'T FORGET TO SEND US A
PICTURE.**

ART EXHIBITION

In 1998 I had a severe brainstem stroke that left me totally paralysed and dumb, with my eyes frozen in their corners, I was 41, and had three young children. Donal O'Kelly (previously at Different Strokes) saw me at the National Hospital in London.



So far, I have made an unusually good recovery (not without considerable effort) am still pretty affected in my speech and movement (mainly use a wheelchair outside, but now walk slowly at home with a walking stick



and I can speak with a speech impediment). After years of constant eye exercise, which

certainly helped, I risked an eye operation earlier this year to straighten them, luckily it worked, but was unknown territory.

The art work is mainly charcoal drawings,



from before I was ill (I was a trained artist) and recent watercolours, which will be auctioned at the private view. The exhibition is from 6th-19th March 2005, at Chelsea & Westminster Hospital mall.

A donation of 25% of the proceeds will be given to Different Strokes

Susan Wintour

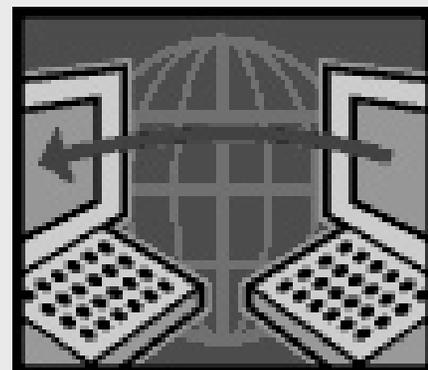
NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL

Would you like to receive future issues of the Newsletter by e-mail?

If so, send an email to:

newsletter@differentstrokes.co.uk

and we'll put you on the electronic mailing list. If for any reason you change your mind in the future we will happily revert to using 'snail-mail'.



STROKE SURVIVORS SOCIALISE IN STYLE!

There's more to stroke recovery than just regular structured exercise...

The Thames Valley *Different Strokes* rehab group for younger stroke survivors, established by Maidenhead resident, Terry Hounsom of St Marks Road, shows us just how much freedom, both social and individual, can be regained after the devastating effects of stroke at an early age.

In August 1997, at age 50, Terry suffered a sub-arachnoid brain haemorrhage, which resulted in a stroke, disabling the left side of his body. He still suffers the subsequent affliction of epilepsy and is partially sighted. He initiated the set-up of a *Different Strokes* rehabilitation class in December 2000, having discovered the veritable lack of proper physiotherapy and after-care available in the area.

Today the class is thriving, its numbers having grown from 5 to 20. But it's not all work and no play for the Thames Valley group! Realising the importance of community as a factor in helping younger stroke survivors to regain independence, the group has recently enjoyed a 4-day weekend break on Hayling Island in South Hampshire.

Sinah Warren, a Warner's Holiday Hotel, played host to the group of 30, which included regular members plus some friends and family. The theme of the weekend was titled the '60s', ensuring that the Saturday night disco throbbed with the sound of old favourites – the *Rolling Stones*, *Freddie and the Dreamers*, and of course the kings of the era: the *Beatles*. Ears filled with well-

remembered tunes, the group swapped photographs recently unearthed for the occasion. Terry says with a grin, "We had some good laughs trying to guess who was who."

The entertainment didn't stop there, it seems. With plenty of day-time amuse-

ments to be had in the area, the group was simply spoilt for choice. Penny Reid, wife of member Tony Reid, tells me, "People took trips out to *HMS Victory* and the D-Day Museum. We saw the



yachts making ready for the Round The World Global Challenge and visited the Gun wharf Quays Shopping Centre, amongst many other things."

Other members took advantage of the hotel activities, ranging from Tai Chi to Line Dancing, Crazy Golf to luxurious Jacuzzi sessions. Penny later remarks, "Whatever your personality, there was something for you. Sinah Warren Hotel appeared to be well organised for catering for disabled and not-so-able guests – I noticed we were not the only group with wheelchairs – and we may well return next year. Everyone agrees that the social side of the Thames Valley group is very important to survivors and carers alike."

On the last night of the break, the group presented a prize to Jackie Kennedy, who personally orchestrated the trip. "As well as running the family business and caring for her severely disabled husband," Terry commented, "Jackie is

one of those miracle workers who also managed to organise the entire event."

All agreed that the weekend was an outright success and the group looks forward to repeating the experience next year.

"On each occasion we spend quality social time together," Terry finishes, "the group seems to become more integrated and therefore stronger. This enables us to offer effective social support to new members and their carers, counteracting some of

the pernicious, depressive and isolating effects of stroke."

In September, the group nominated Terry Hounsom for the prestigious, philanthropic *Beacon Fellowship Award 2004-5*, as they believe his successful establishment of the Thames Valley branch of *Different Strokes* deserves to be nationally recognised.

Lucy Avryl

CAN YOU HELP?

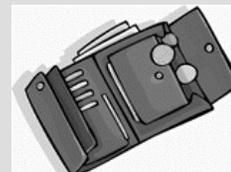
As you know, Different Strokes is a "one-stop" organisation which provides free advice, information and rehabilitative services which are relevant to younger people and caters for the wide range of disabilities, issues and problems that result from stroke. Our aim is for all stroke survivors under retirement age to optimise their re-



covery, take control of their own lives, regain as much independence as possible and return to their full rôle within their communities with high self-esteem.

Next year we will need to spend nearly £200,000 just to continue providing the current services. We receive no funding

from the Government or the NHS - all the money we have is donated.



Please help Different Strokes to continue to help younger stroke survivors by:

- o *Sending a donation or giving regularly by Direct Debit - use the enclosed form*
- o *Buying Christmas cards (it's not too late) - go to www.differentstrokes.co.uk/cards*
- o *Making 2005 the year you do an exciting challenge - jump out of a plane, cycle from London to Paris, trek in Peru at no cost to you, just raise the minimum amount of sponsorship for Different Strokes.*

For information on any of the above email giving@differentstrokes.co.uk or ring 0845 130 7172.

Thank you and Happy Christmas!

CLASSES AND CONTACTS

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