

Belgian patients first in Europe to receive pioneering implant for migraine

WEST FLANDERS - AZ Delta in Roeselare has successfully treated its first patients for severe migraine with a paper-thin implant. This is the second time worldwide and the first time in Europe that the bioelectronic foil, developed by Dutch start-up Salvia BioElectronics, has been implanted. Dr. Bart Billet, a pain specialist at AZ Delta who performed the procedures with his colleagues, emphasizes the hope and new opportunities this implant offers to people with migraine.

"I felt that my migraine improved immediately. I can sleep, laugh and enjoy life to the fullest again," says one patient. The 35-year-old woman is so happy with the accompanying small portable device that she even designed a special bag for it. "I call it my little bag of happiness."



Migraine affects one in seven people. More than five percent of people with migraine have chronic migraine, with 8 or more migraine days per month. Despite recent drug treatments that may benefit a large group of patients, many people living with migraine remain in desperate need of effective treatment.

Paper-thin implant

Salvia BioElectronics was founded in 2017 with a clear mission: to give people with migraine and cluster headache their lives back. The company is focused on developing flexible bioelectronic foils that offer a promising neuromodulation solution for headaches. "We are restoring balance to the brain," says Dr. Wim Pollet, Chief Medical Officer of Salvia BioElectronics.

The procedure

The first patients in Belgium were treated at AZ Delta in the province of West Flanders. The hospital's pain center has a large multidisciplinary team of pain specialists, nurses, physiotherapists, social workers, psychologists and others. The patients were treated by Dr. Bart Billet, an innovative pain specialist at AZ Delta, and his colleagues. "We implanted the paper-thin foil under the surface of the skin. Using mild electrical pulses, we can calm the nerves and prevent and relieve migraine," he explains. "This is a promising technology to help people with severe headaches."

The patients were selected by Dr. Maarten Goethals and his neurology team at AZ Delta. Dr. Goethals specializes in disorders of the peripheral nervous system and has developed considerable interest and expertise in migraine over the course of his career. He is very pleased with the initial results and sees a significant improvement in patients' quality of life. "This gives us all hope for the future."

However, it's important to note that clinical trials have only just begun. More research is needed to fully understand the safety and efficacy of Salvia's device.

First results presented

The implantation method for this innovative device was developed with the help of Pr. Dr. Mark Plazier, a neurosurgeon in Hasselt and Sint-Truiden. Earlier this month, he presented the first results at the International Neuromodulation Society Congress in Hamburg, Germany.

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