

Stem cell therapy may be effective treatment for Parkinson's disease

Stem cells can be used to heal the damage in the brain caused by Parkinson's disease, according to scientists in Sweden.

They said their study on rats heralded a "huge breakthrough" towards developing effective treatments.

There is no cure for the disease, but medication and brain stimulation can alleviate symptoms.

Parkinson's UK said there were many questions still to be answered before human trials could proceed.

The disease is caused by the loss of nerve cells in the brain that produce the chemical dopamine, which helps to control mood and movement.

To simulate Parkinson's, Lund University researchers killed dopamine-producing neurons on one side of the rats' brains.

They then converted human embryonic stem cells into neurons that produced dopamine.

Parkinson's is one of the commonest neurodegenerative diseases

These were injected into the rats' brains, and the researchers found evidence that the damage was reversed.

There have been no human clinical trials of stem-cell-derived neurons, but the researchers said they could be ready for testing by 2017.

Read full original article: [Parkinson's stem cell 'breakthrough'](#)