

Pill Could Reverse Effects of a Stroke Long After It Hits

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For the 800,000 people in the United States who suffer a stroke each year, the window for drug therapy closes in the first few hours after the attack. That leaves some seven million stroke survivors in this country alone with no medical alternative beyond physical therapy. A small pharmaceutical company in New York hopes to change that with a drug that may help patients regain some of their lost mobility six months or more after a stroke.

Strokes happen when blood stops flowing to part of the brain, often due to a blood clot. Without blood to bring new oxygen, cells in the affected region start to die. If the symptoms of stroke are recognized quickly enough and the victim is brought to a hospital within a few hours, doctors can administer a clot-dissolving drug to minimize the damage. But only a small fraction of stroke patients seek medical attention soon enough for this intervention.

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