

# Virtual arm eases phantom limb pain

Amputee Ture Johanson moves his virtual hand *on the computer screen*

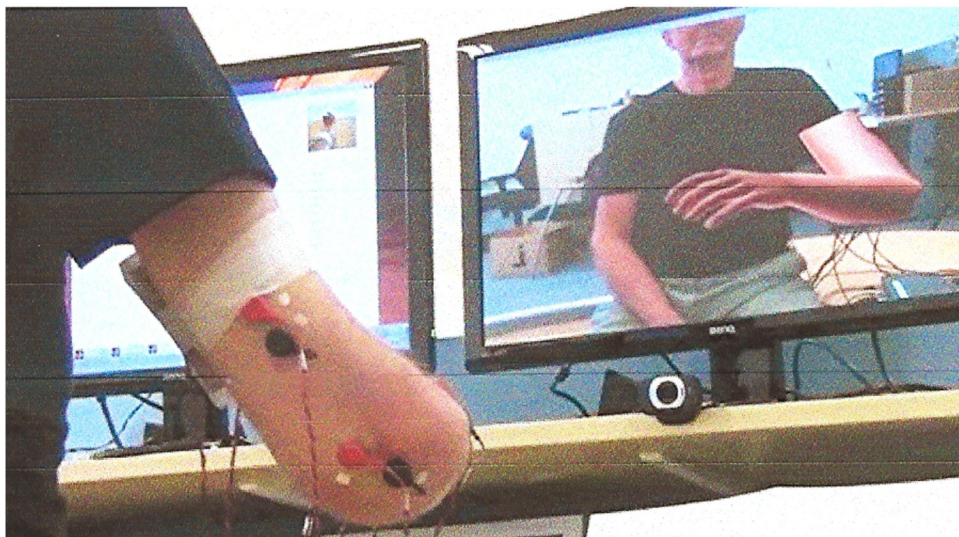
Mr Johanson, who is 73 and lives in Sweden, lost half of his right arm in a car accident 48 years ago.

After a below-elbow amputation, he faced daily pain and discomfort emanating from his now missing arm and hand. Over the decades he has tried numerous therapies, including hypnosis, to no avail.

Doctors have devised a new way to treat amputees with phantom limb pain. Using computer-generated augmented reality, the patient can see and move a virtual arm controlled by their stump.

Electric signals from the muscles in the amputated limb “talk” to the computer, allowing real-time movement. Amputee Ture Johanson says his pain has reduced dramatically thanks to the new computer program, which he now uses regularly in his home.

“For 48 years my hand was in a fist but after some weeks with this training I found that it was different.” He now has periods when he is free of pain and he is no longer woken at night by intense periods of pain.



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