

# Neuralink Implants Brain Chip in First Human, Musk Says

January 29, 2024, *Reuters*

Elon Musk, Neuralink's billionaire founder, said on Monday the first human patient received an implant from the brain-chip startup on Sunday and is recovering well. "Initial results show promising neuron spike detection," Musk said in a post on social media platform X.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration had given the company clearance last year to conduct its first trial to test its implant on humans. The first product from Neuralink would be called Telepathy, Musk said in a separate post on X.

The startup's PRIME Study is a trial for its wireless brain-computer interface to evaluate the safety of the implant and surgical robot.

The study will assess the functionality of the interface, which enables people with quadriplegia or paralysis of all four limbs to control devices with their thoughts, according to the company's website.

Neuralink opened the study trial for recruitment last September. The startup did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for further details. Neuralink has faced calls for scrutiny regarding its safety protocols.

Reuters reported earlier this month that the company was fined for violating U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rules regarding the movement of hazardous materials.

Last November, four U.S. lawmakers asked the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission to investigate whether Musk committed securities fraud by allegedly misleading investors about the safety of a brain implant being developed by Neuralink.

Neuralink's technology will mainly work through an implant called the "Link" — a device about the size of five stacked coins that is placed inside the human brain through invasive surgery.

According to data company Pitchbook, last year California-based Neuralink had more than 400 employees, and has raised at least \$363 million.

Though he wins most of the headlines, Musk is hardly alone in trying to make advances in the field, which is officially known as brain-machine or brain-computer interface research. Hit with delays, the tycoon had reportedly reached out to join forces with implant developer Synchron about a potential investment. Unlike Neuralink, its implant version does not require cutting into the skull to install it. The Australia-based Synchron implanted its first device in a U.S. patient in July 2022.

1. Summarize the text: (What is Neuralink? How much progress have they made? What are some of the problems they faced...)
2. Commentary: What is your opinion of such research on human brain? Should billionaires like Musk lead medical research?