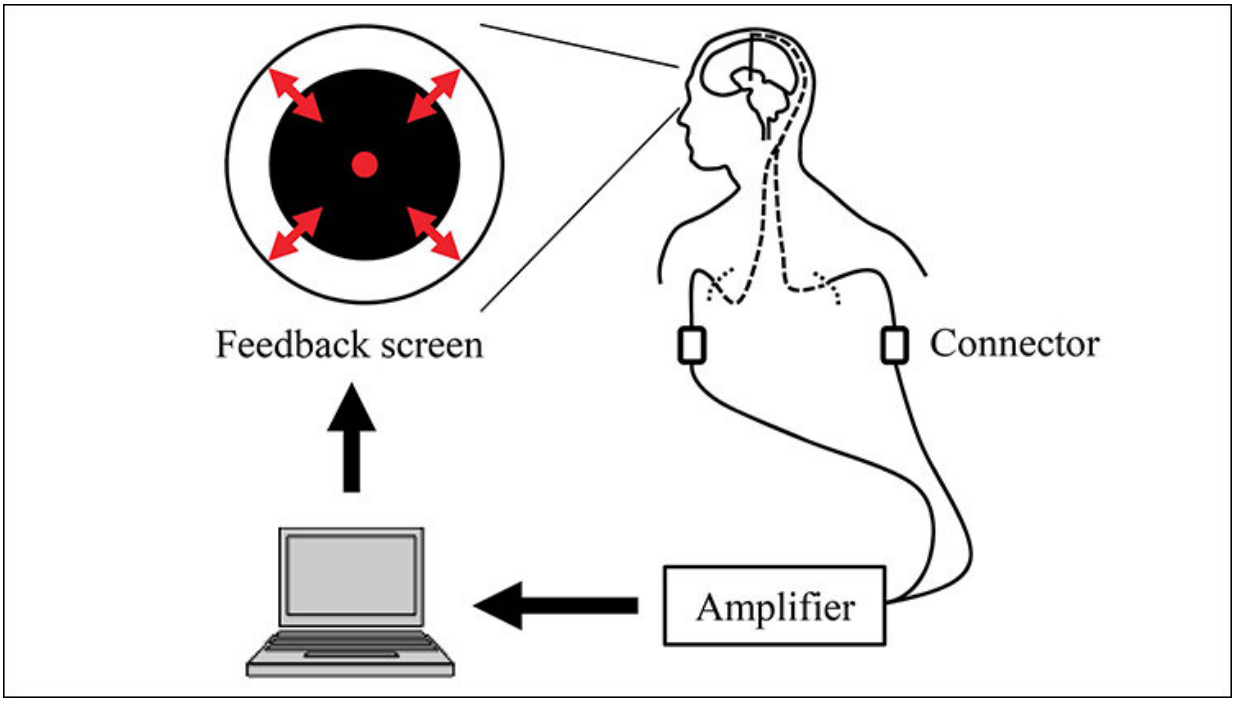
Real-time feedback tames Parkinson's brainwaves

December 17 2018



Feedback system overview. Signals from the DBS electrodes were acquired in real time. The radius of the black circle on the computer screen was controlled based on the β-band power of the acquired bipolar signals from adjacent contacts that were selected in the pre-feedback session. Credit: Fukuma et al., *eNeuro* (2018)

A neurofeedback system enables Parkinson's disease patients to voluntarily control brainwaves associated with symptoms of the disorder,

according to new research published in *eNeuro*. It remains to be determined whether such a system can provide symptom relief.

Parkinson's disease is associated with abnormal beta wave activity in the subthalamic nucleus (STN), but a direct connection between this activity and movement difficulties has not been established. In their study of eight patients undergoing a routine replacement of a pulse generator used for deep brain stimulation, Takufumi Yanagisawa and colleagues developed a method that could help scientists better understand the relationship between brain activity and disease symptoms.

By translating participants' real-time brain activity into a visual representation during a 10-minute training session, the researchers demonstrate the patients' ability to increase or decrease the size of a black circle with their thoughts alone.

This manipulation had a corresponding effect on STN beta waves measured after the training session.

Although the researchers did not observe an improvement in patients' symptoms, their study represents a new approach toward managing disease-related brain activity that could inform the development of new treatments.

More information: Real-time neurofeedback to modulate β-band power in the subthalamic nucleus in Parkinson's disease patients, DOI: www.eneuro.org/lookup/doi/10.1 … /ENEURO.0246-18.2018

Provided by Society for Neuroscience