

Video shows first Neuralink brain chip patient playing chess by moving cursor with thoughts

Sarah Al-Arshani

USA TODAY

The first patient to get a cybernetic implant from Elon Musk's Neuralink company appeared to move a cursor using his brain to play online chess in a video released by the company.

In a [livestream](#) X, formerly Twitter on Wednesday, [Noland Arbaugh](#) moves the cursor on a computer without using any physical tools. Arbaugh, 29, said he used his mind to play the online chess game. "It was like using the force," Arbaugh said. Arbaugh has been paralyzed from the shoulders down after a "freak" diving accident eight years ago, he said in the live stream.

In the video, Arbaugh said he loved playing chess but it hasn't been something he was able to do often in the past few years. "Now it's all being done with my brain. You can see the cursor moving around the screen, that's all me," he explained.

Who is Noland Arbaugh?

Arbaugh, an Arizona native, was a student and athlete at Texas A&M when he became paralyzed, according to a [GoFundMe](#) that was set up in 2017 to help him get a handicapped access van.

According to the fundraiser, Arbaugh was working as a summer camp counselor for children when he got into the accident that left him quadriplegic in 2016.

"I'm paralyzed from below the shoulders. I have no sensation or movement below my level of injury, so below my shoulders," Arbaugh said in the livestream.

An avid gamer, Arbaugh said Neuralink gave him the ability to play games again, including Civilization 6, which he played for eight hours straight.

"I had basically given up on playing that game," he said in the video. "I just wasn't really able to play it as much as I wanted to and you all gave me that ability again."

Neuralink implant:First human to receive Neuralink brain implant is 'recovering well,' Elon Musk says

First patient to receive Neuralink chip

Arbaugh is the first person to use this new technology. In January, Musk announced that the first human to receive the brain chip was recovering well.

"Initial results show promising neuron spike detection," Musk said on X after the procedure.

During the livestream, Arbaugh said he had no issues following his surgery.

"The surgery was super easy," Arbaugh said in the livestreamed video. "I literally was released from the hospital a day later. I have no cognitive impairments."

However, Arbaugh said the technology is "not perfect" and they "have run into some issues."

"I don't want people to think this is the end of a journey because there are things to work out, but it's already changed my life," he said.

Clinical trials:Elon Musk's Neuralink chip is ready to embark on its first clinical trial. Here's how to sign up.

Neuralink technology aims to help paralyzed people

Neuralink's brain-computer interface, or BCI, would allow people to control a computer or mobile device wirelessly "just by thinking about it," according to the company's website.

In May, the tech startup owned and co-founded by Musk announced it received approval from the Food and Drug Administration to implant brain chips into humans.

The company announced in September that it received approval to recruit for the first-in-human clinical trial of its wireless BCI.