

Interface between the Human Brain and Computers: Elon Musk's Neuralink Could be Trialed in Humans in 2023. Here's What You Need to Know

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Elon Musk's Neuralink—the company which promises to enable a direct interface between the human brain and computers—plans to begin human trials of its implantable brain chip, the billionaire said during a live-streamed event demonstrating the technology Wednesday. Here's what it's all about:

- Musk, who co-founded the company, said Neuralink has sought approval from the Food and Drug Administration to begin human clinical trials for the device and said the company expects it will be able to plant its first brain chip in a human in six months.
- Here's how it works: Neuralink's brain-computer interface uses thousands of small electrodes embedded in the brain to read signals emitted by neurons and transmit them to a computer.
- Musk claimed one of the first real-world applications for Neuralink's chip could be to restore vision in people who have lost their sight or even restore motor function in people suffering from paralysis, although this wasn't shown off in any of the demonstrations.
- The billionaire and world's richest person also said he believes one of the early uses of this technology could allow a paralyzed person to interface with a computer by being able to type and move a mouse cursor with their brain signals.
- The company demonstrated a surgical robot that it claims is capable of safely implanting Neuralink's chip onto a human by precisely inserting electrode

threads into a person's brain while avoiding critical blood vessels.

- The company's current implantable chip is around the size of a quarter and Musk claimed it has the same thickness as the piece of skull that needs to be removed to implant it, making it completely unobtrusive—unlike other similar devices which have visible wires and tend to be larger.

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