

'For me, LDN is life-changing'

by Nicola Rider

A POLICE inspector is backing calls for a revolutionary new MS treatment to be offered by all doctors.

John Oag has suffered with multiple sclerosis for more than 10 years but says his life has been changed by a new treatment.

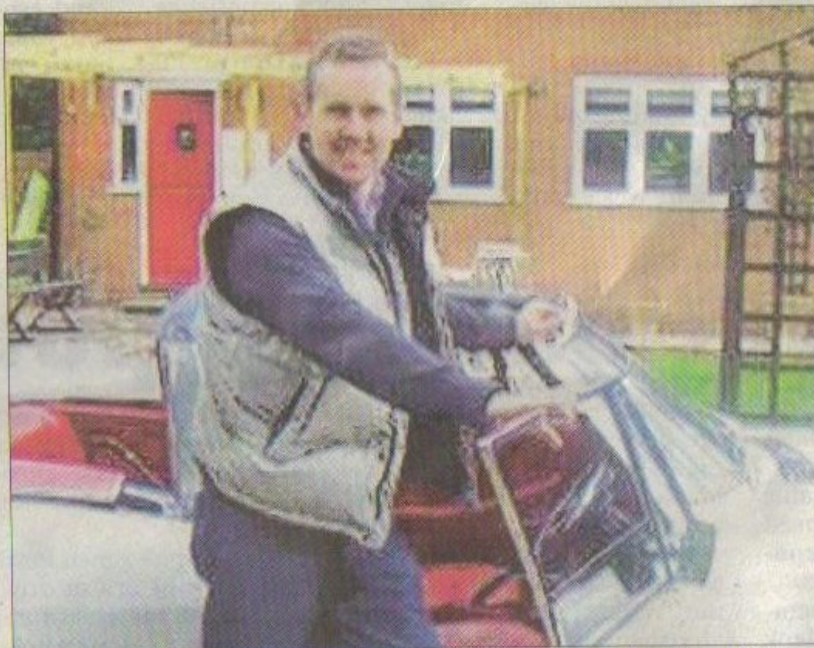
Unfortunately, the drug, LDN (low-dose Naltrexone), is not available to everyone as it has not yet had clinical trials carried out.

Mr Oag, from Horsell, said: "I have taken LDN for 19 months and the improvements have been fabulous, especially my bladder, heat intolerance and optic neuritis.

"I am an inspector in the Metropolitan Police, I have been an officer for 28 years. I am not on operational duties because I am no longer able to walk unaided.

"But I have managed to retain my job – for me, LDN is life-changing."

Mr Oag's MS symptoms began in 1987 with an eye problem. In 2000, further symptoms developed, and Mr Oag said: "The thing about the condition is that no two sufferers are the same."



John Oag, from Horsell, has noticed a great improvement after taking LDN.

The LDN Research Trust believes that the lives of 100,000 multiple sclerosis sufferers in the UK could be improved by taking the drug.

Mr Oag has been spreading the word about the advantages of the drug during his physiotherapy sessions in Woking.

He said: "All I know is that

since I have been on this, it has been life-changing.

"My family has noticed a difference as well. I am not going to be running the marathon next week but it has helped me in so many ways."

Naltrexone has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for treating

alcoholism and drug addiction and works by blocking cravings.

Around 1% of the LDN dosage prescribed to addicts is used when treating MS sufferers.

Linda Elsegood, from the research trust, said: "Naltrexone is a generic drug that is out of patent, so very cheap to produce.

"The downside of that is that drug companies will not fund trials as there is no money in it for them. LDN can treat the crippling effects of MS without side-effects and at a fraction of the cost of existing treatments.

"An annual prescription can cost just £180, while the interferon drugs currently favoured by the NHS cost £10,000."

Research carried out by the LDN Research Trust suggests the NHS could save £300 million a year by prescribing LDN.

The figure takes into account medication, professional care and disability aids.

Mrs Elsegood added: "We believe that the annual savings could be much higher.

"Clinical trials would cost just £2m and could benefit MS sufferers, their families and the NHS.

"Accurate MS data is unfortunately hard to come by but you

can't put a price on the thousands of lives that have been transformed by LDN.

"We urge the government to fund these trials for people, not only with MS but also Crohn's, cancer and other diseases."

What is MS?

- Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a condition of the central nervous system.
- It is the most common disabling neurological disease among young adults and affects around 100,000 people in the UK.
- MS is most often diagnosed in people between the ages of 20 and 40, and women are almost twice as likely to develop it as men.
- MS is a lifelong illness but treatments and specialists can help manage the symptoms.
- Symptoms include difficulty with balance, fatigue, problems with vision, bladder and bowel problems, speech difficulties and problems with memory and thinking.