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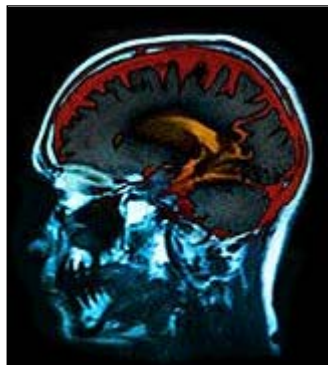
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Using Light to Silence Harmful Brain Activity

Novel tool might lead to treatments for epilepsy, Parkinson's, researchers say.

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WEDNESDAY, Jan. 6 (HealthDay News) -- New tools that use different colors of light to silence brain activity could lead to new treatments for disorders such as epilepsy, chronic pain, Parkinson's disease and brain injury, neuroscientists say.

These so-called "super-silencers" provide precise control over the timing of the shutdown of overactive brain circuits, something that's impossible with existing drugs or other conventional treatments, according to the research team from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The research is published in the Jan. 7 issue of the journal *Nature*.

"Silencing different sets of neurons with different colors of light allows us to understand how they work together to implement brain functions," study senior author Ed Boyden, a professor in the MIT

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