

A new clinical research trial at Michael E. DeBakey VA in Houston, TX is offering Veterans with ALS hope for the future.

As part of the research trial, 10 Veterans with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis will get the opportunity to receive groundbreaking cell therapy targeted at reducing neuroinflammation as a treatment for the neurodegenerative disease.

ALS is a rare rapidly progressing and fatal neurodegenerative disorder that affects Veterans twice as often as people who did not serve in the military. People with ALS experience muscle weakness, loss of movement, and difficulty breathing and swallowing, resulting in a severely declining quality of life and eventually death.

“We are very excited to open this first cell therapy trial for ALS in VA,” said Dr. James Orengo, principal investigator of the trial, which began in December. “We know that neuroinflammation fuels the ALS disease process. We believe that this new treatment, which involves calming the immune system in the central nervous system, holds great promise in halting this disease. Being a part of this multi-center study will help us give Veterans the opportunity to receive a cutting edge therapeutic that could be life changing. Participants will receive nine intravenous infusions of the study drug over a six-month period. The goal is to significantly slow the progression of the disease to allow Veterans to maintain their quality of life.”