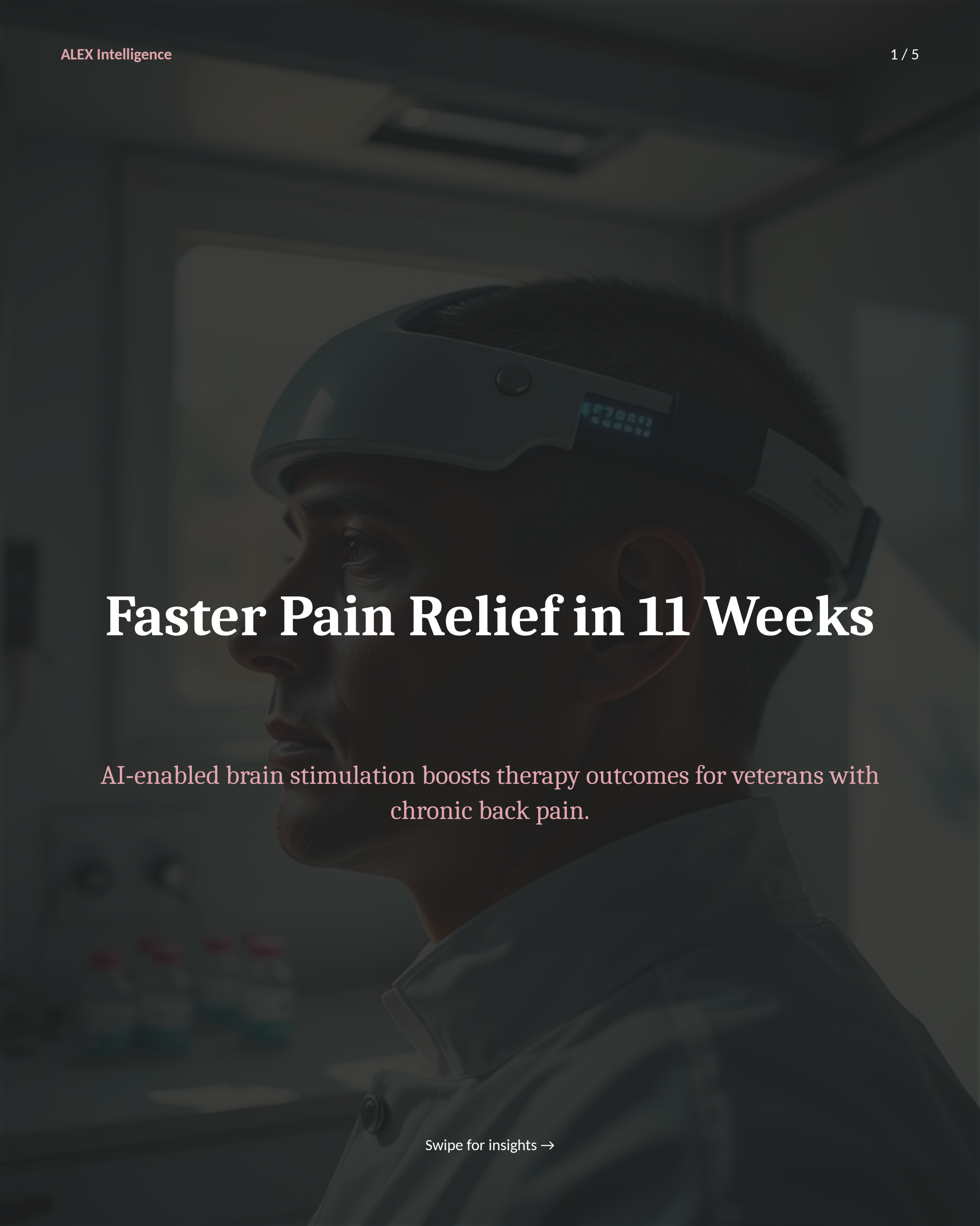


# Faster Pain Relief in 11 Weeks

AI-enabled brain stimulation boosts therapy outcomes for veterans with chronic back pain.

Swipe for insights →

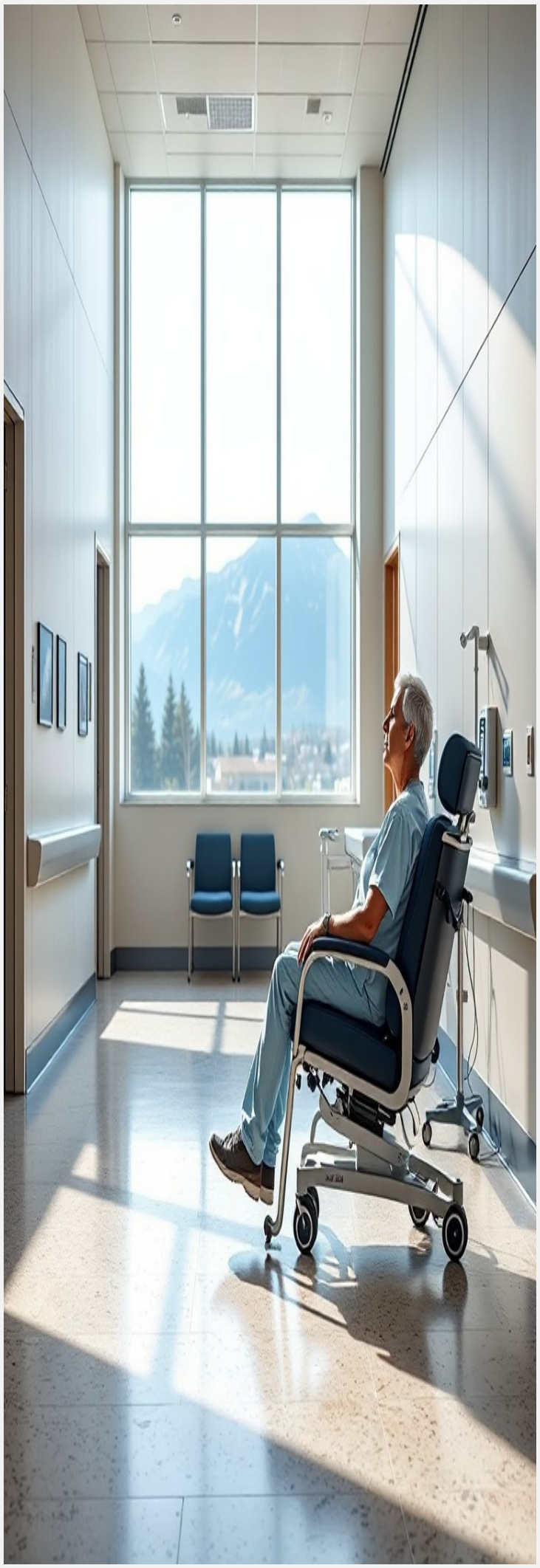
THE DATA

# 11 weeks

**Therapy Duration**

The study measured outcomes over 11 weekly sessions combining brain stimulation with cognitive behavioral therapy.

This 11-week intervention showed that veterans receiving real transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) experienced faster reductions in pain and functional impairment compared to the sham group. The speed of improvement was a critical differentiator, suggesting that neuromodulation can accelerate the therapeutic window.

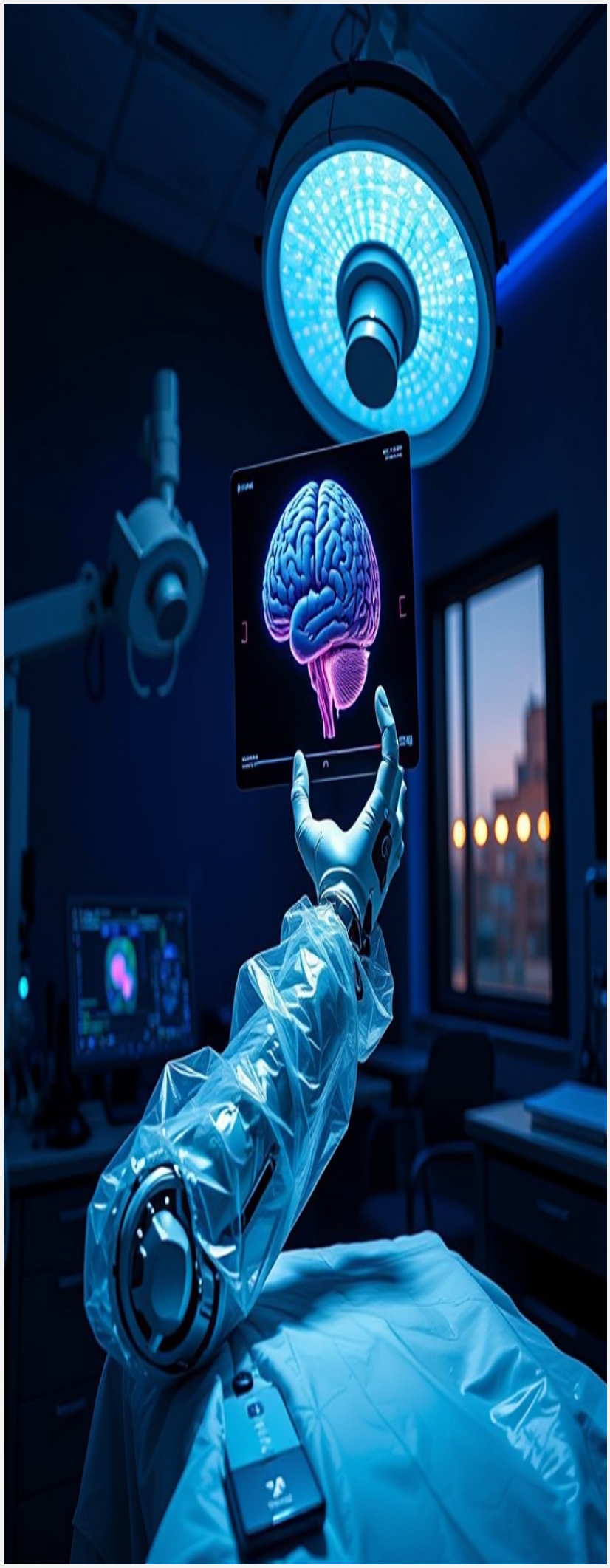


Source: University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus · Published November 20, 2026
https://news.cuanschutz.edu/department-of-medicine/brain-stimulation-therapy-veterans-back-pain-research

# 01

## Speed, Not Just Efficacy

The real breakthrough isn’t just symptom reduction — it’s the acceleration of therapeutic gains. For chronic pain patients, delayed relief often leads to dropout. By shortening the time to perceived benefit, tDCS may increase treatment adherence, especially in populations with high dropout risk like veterans with comorbid substance use disorders. This is a systems-level insight: the value of AI in healthcare isn’t just in the algorithm, but in optimizing the human therapeutic journey.



# 02

## Non-Pharmacologic Leverage

While opioid misuse didn’t improve significantly in the short term, the study’s findings suggest that faster functional gains could have downstream effects. By reducing the time patients spend in debilitating pain, early neuromodulation may indirectly lower reliance on opioids over time. This reframes pain management: the goal isn’t just pain reduction, but creating a therapeutic momentum that prevents the escalation of pharmacologic dependency — a subtle but powerful shift in care strategy.

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