Prof John Priestley is Emeritus Professor of Experimental Neuroscience in the Centre for Neuroscience and Trauma at Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), and was head of department from 1998-2008. He moved to QMUL in 1997 to take up a personal chair in the Anatomy Department, after spending 12 years in the Departments of Physiology and Biochemistry at the Medical School of Guy's and St Thomas's. Prof Priestley retired in 2013 because of ill health, but continues to interact with colleagues at QMUL. He works on the anatomy and neurochemistry of dorsal root ganglion (DRG) neurons and spinal cord neurons, with a particular focus on their response to injury and the organization of pain pathways. Prof Priestley's work has resulted in over 170 peer reviewed scientific publications. Much of this work involves sophisticated techniques for localizing and imaging biomolecules in tissue sections, together with experimental studies manipulating spinal cord and peripheral nerves in vivo. In 2006, one of his images won the Wellcome Trust Biomedical Images award, and in the same year Prof Priestley was awarded the Combined Royal Colleges Medal of the Royal Photographic Society "for the outstanding example of photography in the service of medicine and surgery". In work funded by the MRC and Wellcome Trust he has examined the neurochemical properties of DRG neurons, including their expression of receptors and intracellular signaling molecules [1,3,12,13]. This has revealed important principles concerning the regulation of DRG neurons by target-derived and injury-derived growth factors, and has contributed to the ongoing development of novel therapies for peripheral neuropathies and neuropathic pain conditions [2,3]. Prof Priestley also has a strong track record of studies on spinal cord injury. Current work focuses on the development of biomaterial-based conduits for peripheral nerve [4] and spinal cord repair [6-8], and the development and evaluation of novel neuroprotective agents [5,9-11,14]. Recent work has been funded by the Wellcome Trust, the BBSRC, by two spinal injury charities (ISRT, CAT), by the Special Trustees of Barts & The London, by Innovation China UK, and by a biomedical seed fund (KinetiQue). Prof Priestley is founder-director of Neurotex, a spin-off company established by QMUL to develop work with novel conduits for peripheral nerve repair which are based on spider-like silks. Until recently, he was also Chairman of the Scientific Committee of ISRT (International Spinal Research Trust).

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