



Back on her feet: Former teacher Anne Bennett

# Just two minutes' treatment and I can walk after 17 years

Daily Mail Reporter

FOR 17 years Anne Bennett lived her life in a wheelchair after being paralysed from the waist down in a freak accident.

The primary teacher had been carrying books when a disc in her back collapsed and burst.

Crippled by fibrosis – a build up of hardened tissue – and suffering from ME, she was told she would never walk again and had to give up her job.

Now, however, the 57-year-old has made an astonishing recovery – thanks to two minutes on an exercise table.

Not only can she walk once more, but at her 40th wedding anniversary party in January she is planning to 'dance all night'.

For years doctors had tried in vain to correct the damage to her legs, but without success, and for Mrs Bennett, a mother of four from Llandudno, North Wales, the future looked bleak.

Then five weeks ago she went to a studio with a toning table, a vibrating exercise platform. After only two minutes of trying to flex her weakened leg muscles, she was struck by an excruciating pain, forcing her off the table.

But that night she felt some sensation in her legs and found she could move them – for the first time in 17 years.

She took her first steps in the bedroom but kept her recovery a secret from her husband Denis, 58, for a week for fear that it was too good to be true.

Doctors believe the movement from the machine combined with weight



Exercise: Toning tables similar to the one used by Mrs Bennett

far without getting aches and swelling, and the soles of my feet are like a baby's. But I will never complain about the pain, I am just so grateful to have my independence back.'

Her GP Dr Mark Ferris, said: 'Anne's determination, together with the sus-

tained exercise programme she'd devised, time spent at the toning tables and losing weight all contributed to the breaking through of the fibrosis. Given the thickness of the fibrosis, it should never have happened. It is very rare.'

## 'Absolutely astounding'

loss from a diet loosened scar tissue and allowed her nerves to work again.

Mrs Bennett said: 'It is astounding. I had resigned myself to life in a chair, and didn't think for one second that the trip to the toning tables would lead to this. I went along with my friend and was helped on to a machine called Body Action. After two minutes I felt a huge pain in my back. I was petrified – my first thought was that I had done some more damage.'

'My friend took me home and I went to bed. Later that night I realised my legs were doing what I was telling them to. My legs were listening to my brain for the first time I could remember.'

'I got out of bed and put some weight on my feet. I wouldn't say I was walking, but I was staggering and I could put one foot in front of the other.'

'Now I have so much to look forward to. I find the most simple things exciting. Getting on an escalator, having a dance with my husband.'

'My youngest child Tamsin is 21 and can't remember ever seeing me walk. When she saw me stand up for the first time she sobbed – she says it is all she has ever wanted.'

Mrs Bennett, who now uses the toning tables twice a week, said: 'There is still a long way to go. I can't walk very