

2018

Happy New Year!

January Chapter Meeting

### What's new in hearing aid technology

How are hearing aids being improved to help us hear and understand better? Even small developments can lead to big changes. Our own Professional Advisor Dr. David DeKriek, Fidelity Hearing Center in Cerritos, will be bringing us the newest information on all this and more. Join us on January 11 to be "in the know!" Bring your questions also; he is always glad to answer them. He's one of our favorite speakers!



### Researchers create 3D printed implant for the middle ear

by [daysiadoug](#), December 21, 2017



In recent times there's been a lot of advancement in 3D printed organs and body parts. Now, 3D printed middle ear implants may be on the horizon.

Researchers at the University of Maryland School of Medicine have designed custom implants that could help treat a damaged middle ear. More specifically, the implants replace tiny bones in the middle ear called ossicles.

The ossicles in the ear can become damaged due to several infections back to back or from trauma to the ear, resulting in conductive hearing loss. Conductive hearing loss is when sound cannot get through the middle and outer ear. The damaged bones can be replaced through surgery. Currently, custom-made steel or ceramic pieces are inserted to replace the damaged bones in the ear. But, there is a big chance that the surgery will be a failure because

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## CHAPTER CALENDAR

All events are held at the at Weingart Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712 unless otherwise noted

- Jan 11** Chapter Meeting, 6:30: Dr. David DeKriek, Au.D.: Incremental Improvement in Hearing Aid Technology Leads to Increase in Features and Sound Quality
- Jan 20** HAT demo, 10:30-12:30, Weingart craft room
- Jan 24** Board Meeting, 12:00-2:00, Weingart craft room

We offer 2 different lip reading classes: Mondays 10:00–noon and Wednesdays 9:30–11:30 am.  
Note: Monday class is on break in January, resumes Feb. 5

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

from **Katie Wright**



### School, math and hearing loss

I volunteer in Sean's 5th grade classroom for math. One of the students I work with has hearing aids and is struggling. That experience and a discussion on a Facebook page has triggered a thought for me about Common Core math. Common Core teaches kids how to think about math rather than just "doing" math; it emphasizes their ability to analyze and explain their answers rather than simply coming up with the correct answer.

As a long-time teacher, I like it. Math doesn't come easily to all kids; everyone learns it differently and "sees" it differently. The Common Core techniques take into consideration different math learning styles. They're meant to build mathematical concepts that will be needed for success in algebra and beyond. Common Core math is very dependent on "math talk" and discussion and vocabulary and concepts. It has the kids talking to each other, sharing out in class which problem-solving technique they chose, discussion about the solution and explaining the solution in writing.

Here is my concern: Are our kids with hearing loss getting the depth of discussion and learning that hearing kids are getting? Being able to hear how other kids solved the problem is critical to developing a deep understanding of math. Merely listening to the teacher and copying how to solve a division problem, for instance, is NOT the new way to learn math. Talking with partners and listening in group discussions are a central part of this new way. Access to group discussions is a learning accommodation that has NOT been adequately provided to our kids with hearing loss. The technology exists but the teaching techniques are harder to implement. It takes a radical shift in the "how" of teaching to pass around an FM mic in a mainstream classroom where maybe only one child has hearing loss. Accommodating

hard-of-hearing children is not a significant part of teacher education. A teacher can teach her/his entire career and never have a child with hearing loss as a student; in California, only 1 out of 500 students are hard-of-hearing. What happens to the career possibilities and earning potential of our students that don't have the same access to learning math?

What was your experience with math in school? Did you have hearing loss as a young person? Did your hearing loss affect your earning potential? Share your story with someone.

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### Time to pay your dues!

Only \$1.00 for the entire year of 2018! Pay your dues to Treasurer Craig Bowlby. Cash only, please!



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### 3D printed middle ear

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the pieces aren't the right size. Now, with the power of precise 3D printers, scientists are able to create implants that fit perfectly in patients' ears, replacing the broken ossicles.

#### The process

The process is very simple—patients go in for a CT scan that makes a 3D image of the person's middle ear. Then, that image is printed using 3D printers with "sub-millimeter" accuracy. The 3D printed implants are much more accurate than the past implants. Patients could experience a shorter surgery time and a higher chance of successfully repairing their middle ear.

#### The future of 3D printed implants

The University of Maryland researchers say that they hope to someday create permeable implants instead of solid ones. This would allow the body to grow stem cells into the implant, possibly restoring hearing loss. This bone implant is not a cure for hearing loss, but with time it may be a good treatment for those with conductive hearing loss. It is a glimpse into our future and shows us how with each day technology continues to advance.

by **ilga**, HAT co-chair

## My TV streamer solution

I don't use hearing aids, but I'm at that point when I have trouble hearing my softspoken friend when we meet for lunch. When watching TV, even with the volume turned up more than I think it should be, the British accents on Masterpiece aren't very clear.

I decided headphones would improve my TV listening. Turns out my old-ish flatscreen doesn't have headphone-friendly connections. Rather than figuring out what adaptors and connections I'd need, I decided to make it easy on myself and spring for a new TV and compatible wireless TV headphones—kind of overkill just to hear my shows better.

While comparison shopping TVs, I came across the new [Roku Ultra](#). For less than the cost of high quality headphones, it solved my TV listening problem. The Ultra replaces the lesser-featured Roku streaming stick I've used for several years. Ultra comes with Roku Enhanced Voice Remote, which has a built-in headphone jack and volume control. I can use the included earbuds or any headphone I already own. (A neckloop should also work.) The remote works with voice commands, and has a "night listening" mode that boosts quiet sounds like whispers, and reduces loud sounds like explosions, for a less extreme range of volume. Ultra was easy to set up and had no issues with my older TV.

The remote is always close at hand, so the wire from headphone to remote doesn't bother me. I just need to remember I'm connected to the remote when I get up to raid the fridge.

The Roku Enhanced Voice Remote also comes with Roku Premiere, or can be ordered separately for around \$30, to use with other compatible Roku models.

*ROKU Ultra with Enhanced Voice Remote around \$100*



## HAT continues outreach activities

In January, Katie will give a talk about HAT to the Mature Years group at the Los Altos Methodist church, with assistance from Maxine Barton-Bauman. Katie will also lead a workshop at the National HLAA Convention in Minneapolis in June. If you belong to a group that you think might like to hear about HAT, let someone on the Committee know.

### Want to get the Informer newsletter by mail? Subscribe or renew for 2018!

Receive 12 print issues for \$10. Pay Treasurer Craig Bowlby at a chapter meeting, or mail payment to:

Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter  
c/o Katie Wright, 7802 Kingbee Street  
Downey, CA 90242

## What is Ménière's Disease?

### Overview

Meniere's disease is a disorder of the inner ear that causes episodes in which you feel as if you're spinning (vertigo), and you have fluctuating hearing loss with a progressive, ultimately permanent loss of hearing, ringing in the ear (tinnitus), and sometimes a feeling of fullness or pressure in your ear. In most cases, Meniere's disease affects only one ear. Meniere's disease can occur at any age, but it usually starts between the ages of 20 and 50. It's considered a chronic condition, but various treatments can help relieve symptoms and minimize the long-term impact on your life.

Signs and symptoms of Meniere's disease include:

**Recurring episodes of vertigo.** You have a spinning sensation that starts and stops spontaneously. Episodes of vertigo occur without warning and usually last 20 minutes to several hours, but not more than 24 hours. Severe vertigo can cause nausea and vomiting.

**Hearing loss.** Hearing loss in Meniere's disease may come and go, particularly early on. Eventually, most people have some permanent hearing loss.

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## Ménière's disease

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**Ringling in the ear (tinnitus).** Tinnitus is the perception of a ringing, buzzing, roaring, whistling or hissing sound in your ear.

**Feeling of fullness in the ear.** People with Meniere's disease often feel pressure in the affected ears (aural fullness) or on the side of their heads.

After an episode, signs and symptoms improve and might disappear entirely. Episodes can occur weeks to years apart.

### Causes

The cause of Meniere's disease isn't understood. One popular theory that hasn't been proved is that Meniere's disease appears to be the result of the abnormal amount of fluid (endolymph) in the inner ear. This often shows on autopsies, but it's not clear that it causes the episodes.

Factors that affect the fluid, which might contribute to Meniere's disease, include:

- Improper fluid drainage, perhaps because of a blockage or anatomic abnormality
- Abnormal immune response
- Allergies
- Viral infection
- Genetic predisposition
- Head trauma
- Migraines

Because no single cause has been identified, it's likely that Meniere's disease results from a combination of factors.

### Complications

The unpredictable episodes of vertigo and the prospect of permanent hearing loss can be the most difficult problems of Meniere's disease. The disease can interrupt your life and cause fatigue, emotional stress, depression and anxiety.

Vertigo can cause you to lose balance, increasing your risk of falls and accidents while driving or operating heavy machinery.

### When to see a doctor

See your doctor if you have signs or symptoms of Meniere's disease. Because any one of them can result from other illnesses, it's important to get an accurate diagnosis as soon as possible.

## A drug treatment for hearing loss

New approach promotes growth of sound-detecting hair cells.

Anne Trafton, April 2017 for May issue of MIT Technology Review  
[Article has been edited for space.]

Within the inner ear, thousands of hair cells detect sound waves and translate them into nerve signals that allow us to hear speech, music, and other everyday sounds. Damage to these cells is one of the leading causes of hearing loss, which affects 48 million Americans.

Each of us is born with about 15,000 hair cells per ear, but noise exposure, aging, and some antibiotics can cause them fatal harm. Humans, unlike some other animals, don't regenerate the cells when that happens. However, the inner ear does contain progenitor cells that can be induced to multiply and turn into hair cells with a certain combination of drugs, according to researchers at MIT, Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH), and Massachusetts Eye and Ear.

"Hearing loss is a real problem as people get older. It's very much of an unmet need, and this is an entirely new approach," says Institute Professor Robert Langer, a member of the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research and one of the senior authors of the study, which appeared in Cell Reports.

To explore possible regeneration techniques, Langer worked with Jeffrey Karp, an associate professor of medicine at BWH and Harvard Medical School, and Albert Edge, a Harvard professor of otolaryngology based at Massachusetts Eye and Ear.

Some of the researchers have started a company called Frequency Therapeutics, which has licensed the MIT/BWH technology and plans to begin testing it in human patients within 18 months.

<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/604066/a-drug-treatment-for-hearing-loss/>



**January** is named for Janus, the Roman god of doors, sunrise and sunset, and beginnings. He is depicted with 2 faces, one looking into the past, the other into the future.

## Learn <sup>How To</sup> Lipread



**Free & Fun!**

**2 classes weekly—  
Join anytime!**

Lipreading can help anyone better understand what someone is saying. This skill is especially helpful to the hard-of-hearing, and when used in combination with hearing aids. Classes meet in the craft room of the Weingart Senior Center.

**Mondays**

**10:00 a.m. to noon**

Led by Elfriede Maclver

**Wednesdays**

**9:30 - 11:30 a.m.**

Led by Linda DeGuire



Classes resume Feb. 5



## Hearing Assistive Technology **HAT demonstrations on Saturday mornings!**

**January 20  
10:30–12:30**

Weingart Senior Center

Jason Weldy of  
CapTel will be  
showing captioned  
phones

Invite your friends and relatives with hearing loss to come and try out a large variety of devices that can improve their ability to hear better in difficult situations. These devices can be very helpful to people with or without hearing aids and are a lot less expensive.

In addition to our large selection of devices for you to try, Sam Moghadam, Hearing Instrument Specialist from Ascent Hearing Center, will also be present to answer questions about hearing aids.

*HAT does not sell hearing aids or hearing assistive devices, but provides information on where to purchase items demonstrated.*

## Informer print subscriptions

Receive paper copies of our terrific newsletter, the Informer. A subscription for 12 monthly issues delivered by US mail is only \$10 per year.

## HLAA, Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

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**Ways and Means** need volunteer!

### Professional Advisor

Dr. David DeKriek, Au.D.

### Newsletter

**Editor** Katie Wright

**Layout** Ilga Dravnieks

### For more information about our chapter:

[hialongbeachlakewood.org](http://hialongbeachlakewood.org)

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## HLAA Hearing Loss Association of America

Join HLAA to receive *Hearing Loss Magazine* and to become part of the one organization that represents the interests of 48 million people with hearing loss in the U.S.

Send \$35 for individual or \$45 for family membership to:

Hearing Loss Association of America  
7910 Woodman Avenue, Suite 1200  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Or join online: [www.hearingloss.org/content/join](http://www.hearingloss.org/content/join)

For more information:

(301) 657-2248 or email [inquiry@hearingloss.org](mailto:inquiry@hearingloss.org).

Membership brochures are available at chapter meetings.

## CTAP California Telephone Access Program

For information, repair or exchange:

English Voice 1-800-806-1191

Spanish Voice 1-800-949-5650

[www.californiaphones.org/about-us](http://www.californiaphones.org/about-us)

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Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter

Hearing Loss Association of America,  
Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter  
c/o Katie Wright  
7802 Kingbee Street  
Downey, CA 90242

## First Class

Address Service Requested

### Upcoming Programs

- Jan 11** Dr. David DeKriek, Au.D.: Incremental Improvement in Hearing Aid Technology Leads to Increase in Features and Sound Quality
- Feb 8** Roberta Smith, California Phones program
- Mar 8** Alison Eier, Advanced Bionics: Auditory Training to improve listening skills

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HLAA Long Beach/Lakewood Chapter Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, 6:30-8:00 pm, at the Weingart Center, 5220 Oliva Ave, Lakewood 90712

### **If you don't like meetings because you can't hear well, our meetings are different!**

- We have a high quality sound system
- You can borrow an assistive listening device
- If you have hearing aids with telecoils, we have a hearing induction loop
- If none of these help, we project captions on the wall for you to read.

We provide all these options free so you can understand what is said.



### **Hearing Loss Association of America**

**HLAA** opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, support and advocacy.

The national support network includes the national office in Washington D.C., state organizations and local HLAA Chapters.

Join HLAA now at [www.hearingloss.org/content/join](http://www.hearingloss.org/content/join) to receive *Hearing Loss Magazine* and become part of the one organization that represents the interests of 48 million people with hearing loss in the United States.