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JUST BY A HAIR

According to the CDC, about 36 million Americans report some degree of hearing loss. More than 90 percent of these cases involve damage to “hair cells” in the inner ear, which convert sound waves into nerve signals that are transmitted to the brain. Unfortunately, we are born with a finite number of hair cells, which are vulnerable to damage from loud noise, trauma, infections, and aging. Once these irreplaceable cells are destroyed, hearing becomes impaired; however, researchers are making strides in finding ways to regenerate hair cells. One of the most promising of these is the discovery of two genes that seem to be responsible for regenerating hair cells. This could have profound consequences for those with sensorineural hearing loss.

TIP OF THE WEEK

When hearing loss originates from the inner ear, one of the best ways to improve communication is to utilize hearing instruments.

P.S. Sensorineural hearing loss occurs when there is damage to the inner ear or to the nerve pathways from the inner ear to the brain.

AA-14