

## Advancing Hearing Solutions

By Linda Bilodeau

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After being diagnosed with sensorineural hearing loss, my father, who also had hearing loss, told me to try anything that would help me hear. Though he died in 2004, I still heed his words. I keep tabs on hearing research through internet searches. My audiologist brings new technology to my attention, and we discuss new products often.

There is much going on within the field of Hearing research. Most hearing aid and cochlear implant manufacturers conduct research and have scientists and physicians solely dedicated to finding new hearing solutions. There are corporations and pharmaceutical companies dedicated to curing hearing loss, by bringing new drugs to market.

It takes time, effort, and a great deal of research before new hearing solutions can be released. In the United States, all new technology and drugs must be safe and effective. This is done through FDA approval. Clinical trials aid in the approval process. All have specific protocols and purposes. The testing phase in clinical trials involves single or double-blind studies. In single blind studies, researchers know whether or not the participant is given the research drug or a placebo. In double blind studies, the researchers don't know if study participants are given placebo or the drug or technology under research.

To be a participant in a clinical trial you must meet specific criteria. Each study outlines those criteria and they are specific to that trial. If you do not meet the criteria of one study, you might be eligible for another. Those chosen to participate in clinical trials are tested and questioned extensively. All participants are told of adverse reactions. Once the trial is finished, the researcher puts data together and tabulates results to see how many people had a positive result.

The benefits experienced from participating in a clinical trial may include, a

positive improvement in hearing at no cost and helping others. However, there is a chance of a negative reaction or that after receiving a placebo, there is no improvement.

A listing of current and past clinical trials can be found on [clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov). There you can search for studies by typing in a main topic such as hearing disorders. Another great source is Hearing Loss Association of America. On the HLAA webpage, click on Hearing help, and then scroll down to research. The drop-down list brings you to a cornucopia of choices.

I recently heard about the FX322 study which is for adults with stable Sensorineural Hearing loss. FX322 is a new drug developed by Frequency Therapeutics, a private upstart with a subdivision dedicated to curing hearing loss. It is hoped that FX322 will regenerate hair cells, thus curing or significantly improving the hearing of those with sensorineural loss. The current study is looking for individuals between 18 and 65 who have developed sudden or noise-induced sensorineural hearing loss. You can apply on their website at: [clarahealth.com](https://clarahealth.com).

Interested in the study, I went online and filled out the initial data form, but was turned down, because I am over 65 and because I did not meet the specific study criteria. However if you are interested in a study, do apply and keep trying. I did receive feedback from Clara Heath and I am now on their list as a potential participant for future studies

From June 23 to June 25, Hearing Loss Association of American will sponsor their national convention in Tampa, Florida. This is another opportunity to learn more about hearing loss research. In fact, there will be a research symposium on Friday morning, June 24. Visit the HLAA website for more information.