

A MAGIC PULLET for DEAFNESS?

Chickens might one day unlock a cure for the hearing impaired. That's the hope of scientists at Stanford University, who are studying the fowl to try to learn how they regenerate the tiny hair cells in their inner ear. Those cells convert sound into electrical impulses, which travel to the brain and produce hearing. Because chickens and other feathered creatures can re-grow these cells after injury, there is no such thing as a deaf bird.

The researchers have figured out how to take embryonic stem cells from mice, implant them into the ears of chick embryos, and coax them to differentiate into hair cells. They're working on perfecting a similar procedure for deaf humans

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