



# LEND US YOUR EARS

## Participants Sought For Hearing Aid Study

Better Hearing Centers of Florida has received a generous grant to conduct an important field study on a new model of open ear hearing aid. It is smaller and more comfortable than traditional hearing aids.

We are seeking people with hearing loss to participate in this study. Both current hearing aid users and non-users are needed.

Participants will earn the free use of this hearing aid for thirty days. All lab and testing services are performed at no charge through this grant.

At the end of this thirty day trial, participants will return the aids or purchase them at a highly discounted price.

For further information on becoming a participant in this field study

**CALL: (239) 458-7900**

# HOLISTIC HEALTH NOTEBOOK

## Can you pass this test?



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The face of health care is changing. "And not a moment too soon," you say. One of the biggest changes that I have seen is a move-

ment toward informed self care. You may remember that your parents handed their bodies to their doctors and said, "Fix me" with little motivation for lifestyle changes.

But in the current days of managed care, medical practices essentially run by insurance companies, and six minute doctor visits, people are eager to take responsibility for their own health. Patients easily scope the Internet, looking for information their doctors may not provide and for ways to maximize their health. This is a positive trend, one that is embraced by many doctors. Patients want to work as a team with their health care practitioner. And why not? No one cares about our health as much as we do.

People now have access to many tests that help them take responsibility. Here are a few of my favorites; you may find them valuable also. Some need to be prescribed by a healthcare practitioner; others you can order on your own. All are administered by competent labs.

One of my favorite tests is the Alcat allergy panel. It is a little pricey and will not be covered by your insurance policy but can be a gold mine of information about why you struggle with pain or other issues not explained by physiological conditions. The test evaluates reactivity to 150 foods. You can upgrade the panel to include environmental, chemical, or other triggers for additional money (of course). I got

my test done, and was staggered by the food sensitivities it uncovered. Was it reliable? Well, when I eliminated my reactive foods, my pain went away. When I re-introduce those foods, the pain comes back.

The second test is a hair analysis to check for mineral deficiencies, mineral imbalances, and the presence of heavy metals. This (as with all other tests) is not perfect but when interpreted by someone who understands the numbers, can shed light on any number of potential problems. The best test for determining mineral imbalances is a packed erythrocyte test which costs a little more and will make your physician a little happier, but is more difficult to obtain.

The third test is the SpectraCell which measures the intracellular function of a wide range of micronutrients. The test uses your own resting lymphocytes, which is more efficient in revealing a person's nutritional status over a longer period of time than conventional serum testing.

My fourth favorite test is the Heidelberg test, a measure of gastric pH. It is not, to my knowledge, available locally but in the absence of this highly sensitive marker of digestive functionality, we substitute a HCl challenge test. Not as good but has some merit. It is practically free and carries little risk of harm. ■

— Carol Simontacchi does lifestyle and nutrition coaching at the office of Dr. Alan Gruning in Ft. Myers. For more information or to set an appointment, call 239-939-3303.

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