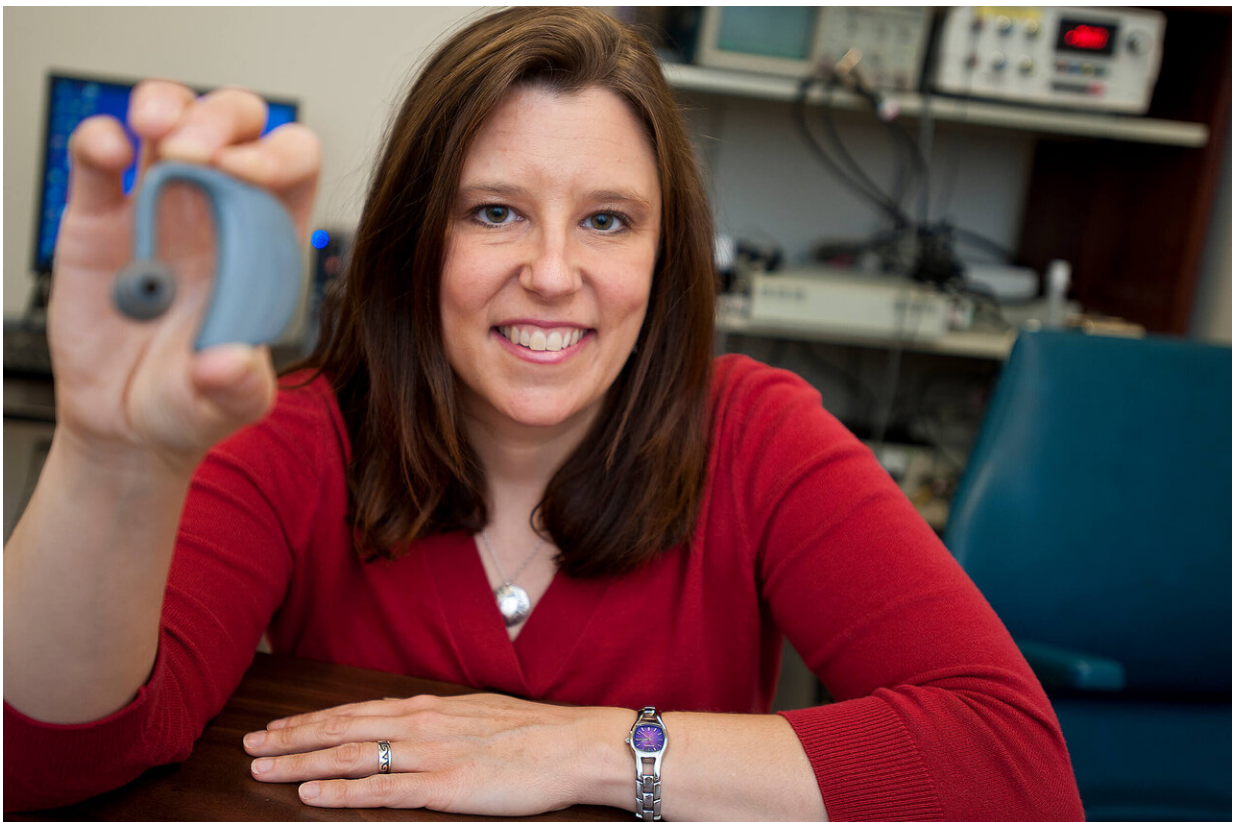


Support grows nationwide for medical device to improve communication in Parkinson's disease

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SpeechVive, created by Jessica Huber, a professor in Purdue's Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences, uses a reflex to improve communication in Parkinson's disease. Credit: Purdue University

A growing number of people with Parkinson's disease are finding the ability to communicate with a wearable device developed by a Purdue University speech-language researcher and entrepreneur.

SpeechVive uses a reflex to improve communication. The [device](#) plays noise in a user's ear when they are talking, which elicits the reflex, resulting in speech that is automatically louder, clearer and lower.

"Since the [wearable device](#) elicits a reflex, the patient does not need to remember to use therapy techniques to communicate in [everyday life](#)," said Jessica Huber, a professor in Purdue's Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences, who developed SpeechVive. "When people with Parkinson's disease cannot be heard or understood, they withdraw from communication exchanges, leading to social isolation. This device makes it possible for patients to continue to communicate with their loved ones well into their disease."

SpeechVive Inc. commercialized the Purdue device to help the more than a million people in the United States who are diagnosed with Parkinson's, one of the most common degenerative neurological diseases. Veterans can receive the device through their local VA hospital as a part of their health care benefits.

"We are working to develop additional routes for individuals to obtain the device," said Huber, who is also the associate dean for research in Purdue's College of Health and Human Sciences. "I enjoy developing and testing devices and therapies that can improve the quality of life for people with Parkinson's disease."

Provided by Purdue University

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