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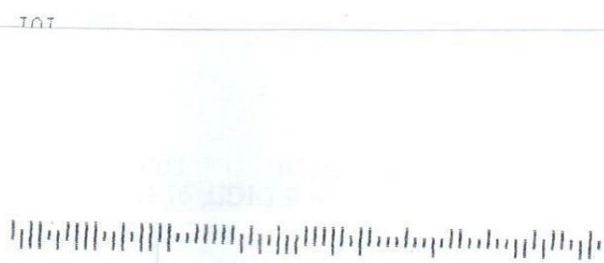
THE SEVENTH SENSE

The immune system may work as a sensory organ that lets the brain monitor microbes throughout the body

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Long thought to be divorced from the brain, the immune system is intimately involved in its functioning—and may act as a kind of sensory organ that helps the brain monitor microbes in the body.

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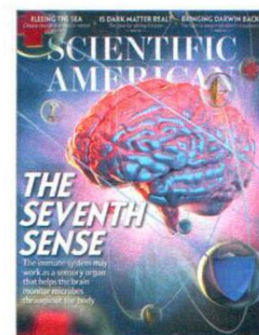
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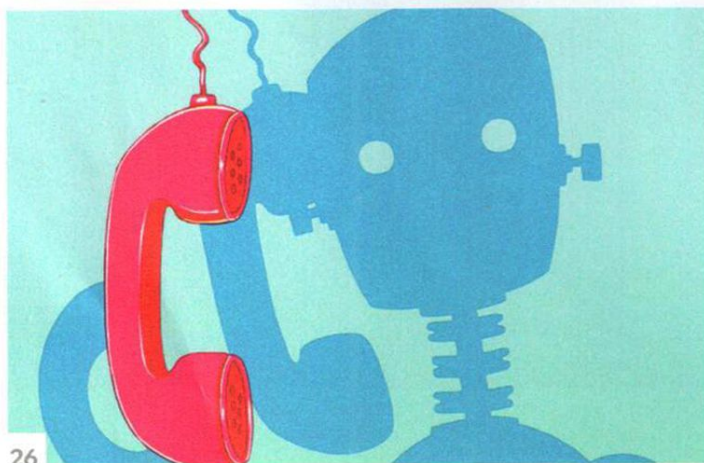
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The brain and the immune system were long thought to live separate lives. Recent research has shown that the brain needs the immune system to function properly, however. The immune system's main job may be to detect microorganisms and report on them to the brain. In this way, it could constitute a seventh sense. Illustration by Mark Ross.

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