

Exploring a Cochlear Implant

An educational guide brought to you by



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www.hearingloss.org

Hearing Loss Association of America

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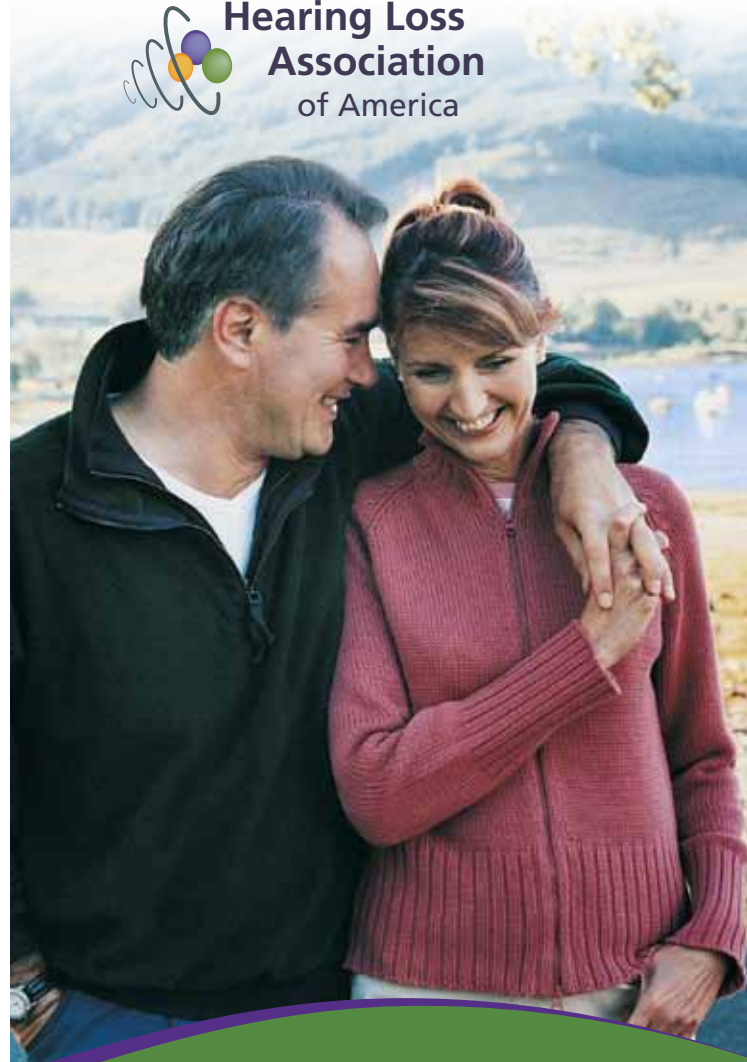
You should talk to your physician about who is a candidate for cochlear implantation, the associated risks and benefits, and CDC recommendations for vaccination. Cochlear implantation is a surgical procedure, and carries with it the risks typical for surgery.

This informational brochure was developed in partnership by HLAA and Cochlear Americas, one of the leading providers of cochlear implants.

Visit www.CochlearAmericas.com
or call 1.800.523.5798



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Learn about cochlear implants
and if they may be for you.

More than 36 million Americans have some degree of hearing loss — approximately one in 10 individuals.¹

More than 188,000 people worldwide have received a cochlear implant.² Cochlear implants are covered by many private insurance policies, as well as Medicare and Medicaid. FDA-approved cochlear implants have become recognized as an established treatment for restoring hearing in adults and seniors with severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss. In fact, cochlear implants have increasingly become the solution for people with severe to profound hearing loss who no longer receive benefit from hearing aids.

Why wait when you can experience sound today?

Whether it happens suddenly or gradually over time, hearing loss can isolate you from the rest of the world, disconnect you from family and separate you from friends and co-workers. This alienation can lead to feelings of depression and loneliness. It can also leave you feeling increasingly frustrated and exhausted handling all the extra challenges associated with trying to live a full, productive life in a hearing world. Yet, the fact that you are reading about hearing loss solutions shows that you are thinking about making a change and you're taking the first step toward a richer world of sound.

We understand you want to enjoy the priceless moments in life with friends and family on the phone, to recognize your favorite song playing on the radio, or participate in daily office conversations. And don't you deserve to go to a party and enjoy a fun evening of conversing with friends and making new acquaintances? Everyday occurrences like these enhance one's quality of life.

Your journey begins here.

"I am like a different person now.

Eiko T., cochlear implant user

Ask yourself the following questions:

Even with powerful hearing aids, do you:

- Hear but not understand?
- Have to ask people to repeat themselves during one-on-one conversations, even in a quiet room?
- Need captions on to understand television programs?
- Avoid social activities because you don't know what's being said and are afraid you may respond incorrectly?
- Depend on lip-reading to understand a conversation?
- Find yourself exhausted at the end of the day because communication requires such a high degree of concentration?
- Have a hard time keeping up at work? Do you find communication at work to be difficult and to interfere with carrying out responsibilities of your job?
- Have trouble hearing on the phone?
- Avoid making and answering phone calls?
- No longer enjoy listening to music?
- When tested by your audiologist with your hearing aids on, do you score less than 60% on your ability to repeat sentences?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may be a good candidate for a cochlear implant. Your hearing health care professional can tell you more.

“My cochlear implant gave me back not only my hearing, but my old self.”

Kimino S., cochlear implant user



NOTE

Cochlear implants are indicated for adults, age 18 and older, who have moderate-to-profound or poorer sensorineural hearing loss in both ears and who have demonstrated limited benefit from wearing hearing aid(s) binaurally (in both ears). Cochlear implants are approved for children 12-24 months with profound hearing loss in both ears and children 2-17 years with severe-to-profound hearing loss in both ears.

Nearly 80% of people who received a cochlear implant within a year of finding out they were candidates said they would get a cochlear implant sooner if they could do it over.³



A cochlear implant may make a big difference in your life.

Typically, within a short amount of time, you can expect to achieve better speech understanding. Research has shown that adults receiving cochlear implants may on average understand sentences almost seven times better than they could with hearing aids.⁴

An implant may help you enjoy everyday moments like:

- Talking on the phone
- Watching and listening to the TV more easily
- Participating in work meetings and conference calls
- Immersing yourself in your community with hearing people
- Communicating better with your family, children and grandchildren
- Communicating better with friends and co-workers
- Talking to people without relying exclusively on lip-reading
- Taking a class or discovering a new hobby
- Participating more fully in the world

“We all wanted to be sure that at dad’s age (93), an implant would be the right choice for him. Dad’s hearing has improved since his cochlear implant and he continues to live independently.”

Tom H., son of a cochlear implant user

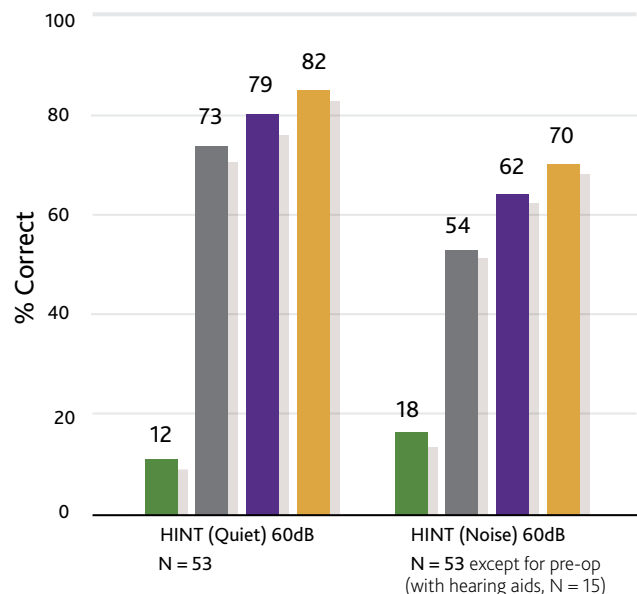
For some individuals, a cochlear implant can provide relatively fast improvements over hearing aids, especially in the crucial area of speech understanding.

One study revealed that adults achieve, on average, recognition scores of 79% correct on a sentence test after using a cochlear implant for just six months, compared to an average of 12% understanding pre-implantation when using well-fit hearing aids.⁵



NOTE Age is not an indicator of who can benefit from a cochlear implant. Children as young as 12 months and seniors well beyond 80 years of age can be candidates for a cochlear implant.

Performance with cochlear implants compared with best-aided testing with hearing aids⁵



Average Scores

- Average Performance Over Time**
N = 53
- pre-op (with hearing aid(s))
 - 3 months
 - 6 months
 - 12 months

The **HINT** (Hearing in Noise Test) is a sentence understanding test. Sentences are spoken by a person in a quiet background or in the presence of background noise. People wearing hearing aids or cochlear implants are asked to listen to the sentences and then repeat as many words from the sentence as they were able to hear. Repeating the words is more difficult in the presence of background noise. In the above study, the test was performed on people wearing hearing aid(s) prior to their implant surgery, then the same test was later performed after their surgery with them using a cochlear implant.

How to get the information you need

Find a hearing clinic and health care team that meets your needs

You should be completely comfortable with your audiologist, since the two of you will be working together throughout the process – before, during and long after you get a cochlear implant. Your implant team should always invite your feedback and questions. There are no wrong questions, and you should feel free to ask as many as you need.

Consulting with a cochlear implant professional can help to ensure that you receive all the information you need to make an informed decision. If you are at a loss for referrals, there are many online and phone services to help you locate a clinic and an audiologist in your area.

Talk to cochlear implant users

Becoming educated about cochlear implants and meeting others who have them are critical steps toward the right decision. Consider reaching out to others who have cochlear implants. They have first-hand experience and tips to share. There are several supportive communities, including ones within the Hearing Loss Association of America, which host meetings, events, workshops and online message boards. These groups can answer your questions and guide your expectations about cochlear implants.

We encourage you to ask questions and to learn more about cochlear implants by accessing any or all of these free services. To easily connect to unbiased communities of cochlear implant recipients, please visit cochlearimplantonline.com

Other trusted organizations you can go to for more information are:

- American Academy of Audiology (AAA): www.audiology.org
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA): www.asha.org
- American Academy of Otolaryngology (AAO-HNS): www.entnet.org

In the back of this guide, you will find a comprehensive list of resources where you can obtain additional information.

“What a joy to be able to participate in conversations again and hear the radio! I feel that I have my life back thanks to cochlear implants.”

Lisa S., cochlear implant user

FACT

A cochlear implant is covered by approximately 90% of private health plans, as well as Medicare and Medicaid. These insurers may also cover bilateral cochlear implants as long as you meet certain medical criteria.

When hearing aids are no longer enough

Cochlear implants are a solution

Many experts in the medical field consider a cochlear implant to be an effective long-term solution for individuals with severe to profound hearing loss who no longer benefit from hearing aids. An audiologist will perform a series of tests to determine the extent of your hearing loss before discussing specific options.

Hearing aids & cochlear implants

Hearing aids can help the majority of people with mild-to-moderate hearing loss — but they can't help everyone. For many people who have severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss in both ears, even the most advanced and powerful hearing aids may not adequately help. That's because hearing aids simply amplify sound — and with a severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss (sometimes referred to as "nerve deafness"), this amplified input can sound very distorted. Despite being referred to as "nerve deafness," most sensorineural hearing loss is a result of damage to the inner ear (cochlea), not the hearing nerve.

NOTE Testing with hearing aids first is a necessary step in the evaluation process for a cochlear implant. A cochlear implant is indicated only for those individuals whose hearing health care provider has documented their minimal/limited benefit from hearing aids. If you don't have hearing aids, your hearing health care provider may be able to loan you hearing aids for this testing.

A cochlear implant is an electronic device that is surgically implanted and works by directly stimulating functioning auditory nerve fibers in the inner ear. Unlike hearing aids, cochlear implants do not amplify sound, but instead are designed to mimic natural hearing. Cochlear implants convert sound waves to electrical impulses and transmit them to the inner ear, providing people with severe to profound hearing loss the ability to hear sounds and potentially better understand speech without reading lips. The cochlear implant has become widely recognized as an established treatment for profound hearing loss.

To learn more about hearing loss and hearing loss solutions, please visit www.hearingloss.org

Q Can I take advantage of future advancements?

A **Yes.** A common misconception is that choosing a cochlear implant now will exclude you from future improvements. Most implant systems are designed to allow you to benefit from future upgrades – without the need for additional surgery. This is a primary consideration when researching solutions you will need to live with for years to come. When choosing a cochlear implant, it is important for you to ask about the company's history of implant reliability and of upgrading their implant recipients to new sound processor technology.

Simply put, getting a cochlear implant as soon as appropriate allows you the opportunity to start experiencing more of the important moments in life again. The sooner you get your implant and begin your rehabilitation program, the sooner you'll start to rediscover once-lost elements of your life.

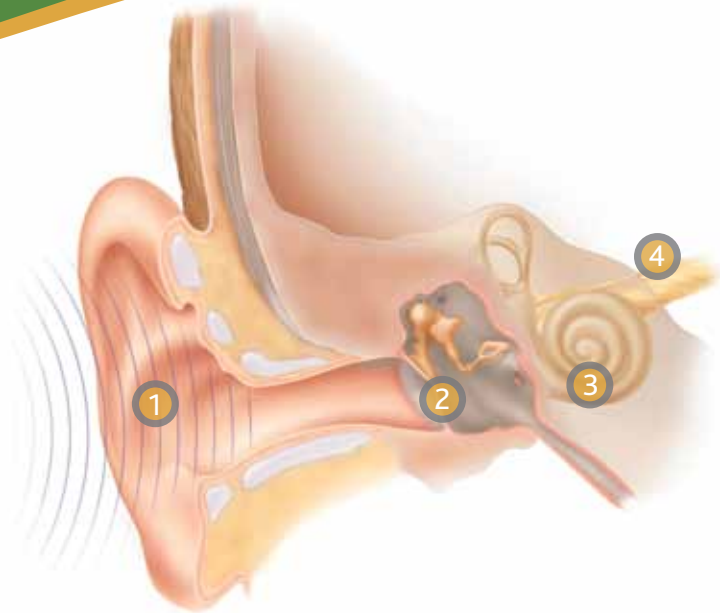
How hearing works

Designed to work the way your ears do — cochlear implants mimic natural hearing

Deep in your ear is a remarkable, pea-sized structure called the cochlea. Tiny, delicate hair cells in the cochlea communicate sound signals to your brain, allowing you to hear different pitches and sounds. Depending on the extent to which these delicate cells are damaged, you can lose some or all of your ability to hear.

Cochlear implants are designed to compensate for the damaged cells, helping to restore your ability to perceive sounds and understand speech. A cochlear implant works by bypassing the damaged part of the inner ear and sending digitized electric sound signals directly to the hearing nerve.

Luz A., cochlear implant user

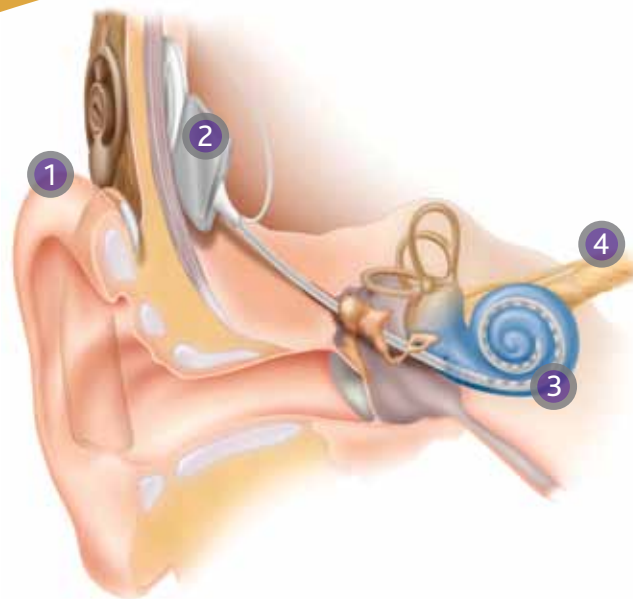


How natural hearing works

- 1 Sounds enter the ear canal and travel to the eardrum.
- 2 These sound waves cause the eardrum to vibrate, sending the bones in the middle ear into motion.
- 3 This motion is converted into electric impulses by tiny hair cells inside the inner ear (cochlea).
- 4 These impulses are sent to the brain, where they are perceived by the listener as sound.



A hearing aid amplifies sounds introduced from the outer ear to the middle and then inner ear.



A cochlear implant system has two parts: an external speech/sound processor and an internal implant.

How a hearing aid works

- 1 The microphone in the hearing aid picks up sound and sends it to the amplifier where it makes it louder.
- 2 The receiver of the hearing aid sends the amplified sound down the ear canal, causing the eardrum and the middle ear bones to vibrate.
- 3 Motion transferred to the cochlear fluids is converted into electrical impulses by tiny hair cells inside the cochlea.
- 4 These impulses are sent to the brain, where they are perceived as sound.

Unfortunately, even the most powerful hearing aids may not help people with severe to profound hearing loss because making sounds louder does not always make them clearer.

How a cochlear implant works

- 1 The microphone in the external sound processor captures sounds, then filters and processes the sounds.
- 2 The sound processor translates the filtered sounds into digital information, which is then transmitted to the internal part of the implant system.
- 3 The internal implant converts the digital information into electrical signals, and sends them to a tiny, delicate curl of electrodes that sits gently inside the cochlea.
- 4 The electrical signals from the electrodes stimulate the hearing nerve. This bypasses the damaged hair cells that result in hearing loss, and allows the brain to perceive sound.

Two ears are better than one

Bimodal hearing is a good solution for many who have some residual acoustic hearing in the ear opposite the implant

"Bimodal hearing" refers to a hearing aid in one ear and a cochlear implant in the other ear. This approach combines the benefits of acoustic stimulation (hearing aid) with those of electric stimulation (cochlear implant) for potentially improved speech understanding in quiet and noise and/or improved music enjoyment for many patients.⁶

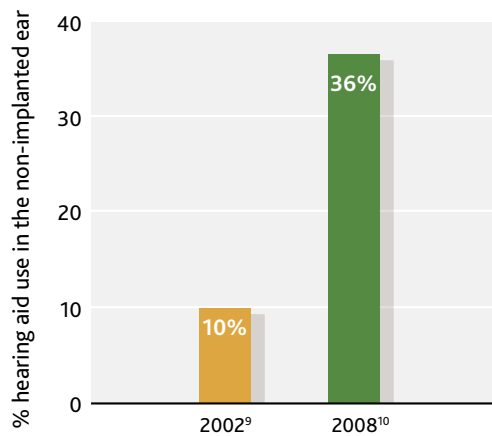
Bilateral implants are also an option

Sometimes, cochlear implants in both ears (bilateral implants) may be appropriate. This is especially true if you receive little or no benefit from a hearing aid in either ear. Bilateral implants are an option you should discuss with your audiologist or hearing health care professional.

"...it is helpful to connect with people who have undergone the implant surgery and activation. Through the Hearing Loss Association of America... I was able to learn from their various experiences so I could make my own informed choice to have simultaneous bilateral cochlear implants. I am happy and thrilled with the results."

Amy B., cochlear implant user

BIMODAL HEARING IS BECOMING A MORE POPULAR OPTION



FACT In a review of clinical studies testing speech understanding, it has been shown that some people hear better when wearing a cochlear implant in one ear and a hearing aid in the other ear than when wearing a cochlear implant alone.⁷ Research also shows that hearing can be improved with such bimodal hearing even in noisy situations.⁸

What to consider when choosing a cochlear implant

Not all cochlear implants are the same

In general, all cochlear implants are designed to restore sound in a similar fashion, but each brand does have differences. It's important to understand the differences between cochlear implant systems and ask the right questions before choosing the best device for you.

The highly technical language associated with today's cochlear implants can be intimidating. The following simplified criteria and useful tips are a good way to help narrow your search:

Implant reliability

Implant reliability is a crucial factor when selecting a cochlear implant, particularly since the implant itself should be designed to last a lifetime. Be sure to ask your audiologist and cochlear implant surgeon about an implant's performance record and whether there is a known history of technical complications or problems with a particular brand or model.

Manufacturers must report their reliability data, measured in terms of Cumulative Survival Rate (CSR). The data may be difficult to understand and, initially, all of the data may look the same, but there are noticeable

differences. It's important to review a product's record beyond the first year of implantation, and ask your audiologist and cochlear implant surgeon about each implant manufacturer's record.

Flexible for an active lifestyle

The durability and versatility of the cochlear implant system should allow you to engage in everyday activities — listening to music, talking on the phone, exercising, playing sports — with minimal disruption. Depending on your lifestyle, you may want to consider a device that is certified as water-resistant.

The external sound processors come with different options for batteries. Manufacturers may offer devices with the option of either rechargeable or disposable batteries — some offer the flexibility of both. With rechargeable batteries, the battery life varies by manufacturer, so you'll want to ask how long you can expect batteries to last. Disposable batteries are ideal for those times when you are in conditions or areas without electricity, such as power outages or when traveling and camping.

What is CSR?

Implant reliability statistics are expressed in terms of the Cumulative Survival Rate (CSR), a standard established by the International Standards Organization (ISO). The CSR standard indicates the likelihood that a device will function properly during a given period of time. You will want to review the track record of each company's products at both year one and beyond in order to make an informed decision.

✓ Speech understanding performance

For many people the primary factor in choosing a cochlear implant system is the device's ability to improve speech perception and understanding in everyday situations. Although other benefits, such as music enjoyment, are also considered important options, experts agree that speech understanding should be considered the first priority.

✓ Access to future technology upgrades

Most cochlear implant systems are future-ready so you can benefit from new technological innovations without the need for additional surgery. A future technology upgrade can be a software upgrade, a hardware or sound processor upgrade, or an implant upgrade.

You'll want to know whether you can easily upgrade your processor as new technology becomes available. This is an important consideration when selecting a cochlear implant system because you will need to live with yours for years to come. It is also important to know that the company you select is committed to investing in new, improved technologies and will make them readily available to their customers. It might be reassuring to meet cochlear implant users who received implants 25 years ago and continue to have access to the advanced processors available today.

✓ Reputation

Be sure to choose a company that you trust to be there throughout your lifetime. In addition to asking for a hearing health care professional's recommendations, talk with other people who have cochlear implants. It's also beneficial to contact each manufacturer and ask questions. You can tell a lot just by spending a few minutes speaking directly with a company representative. Be sure to ask about implant reliability, speech understanding, flexibility and company reputation.

✓ Rehabilitation and educational services

Rehabilitation is vital to achieving the best possible hearing and speech outcomes. As the saying goes, "practice makes perfect." No matter how good the cochlear implant is, success depends on the decisions of the individual recipient, the audiologist, hearing rehabilitation specialist, and health care team working together and investing time in ongoing rehabilitation. Consider the rehabilitation and educational support provided by each manufacturer and whether it serves your needs. Be sure to team up with a rehabilitation specialist early on.



Eiko T., cochlear implant user

Obtaining insurance coverage

Unlike hearing aids, cochlear implants are covered by many private insurance policies, as well as by Medicare and Medicaid. Bilateral implantation may be covered by these insurers also if you meet medical criteria. You will need to check for exact requirements and coverage, as benefit entitlement may differ from state to state and from plan to plan.

If you have commercial insurance, you should check with your healthcare policy benefits manager to determine exact coverage and reimbursement. Your plan may require pre-authorization for certain services. If needed, your audiologist or physician may help you obtain pre-authorization of coverage on your behalf. Your plan may also offer you a "pre-determination" of benefits that will provide you with coverage insurance applicable to your plan.

In addition, some manufacturers of cochlear implants provide services to help guide you through the insurance and reimbursement process. These manufacturers usually have dedicated experts to assist you, even if you're initially denied coverage. For best results, be sure to enlist these services early on in the process. If you have Internet access, visit the manufacturer's website and search for insurance or reimbursement support for more information.

If you need assistance navigating what can be viewed as a complex process, contact OMS insurance support at **800.633.4667** or visit **www.omsinsurancesupport.org**

The general process for obtaining insurance pre-determination for a cochlear implant is usually simple. However, there are occasions where additional steps, such as an appeal, are required. The general process is detailed step-by-step below:

- Patient's insurance information is collected
- Health care provider will contact the insurance company to confirm benefits and obtain a fax number or address to send a predetermination letter request
- Health care provider submits a predetermination letter explaining the procedure and includes the billing procedure, codes and diagnosis. They may also include a letter of medical necessity from the physician, patient history notes, audiograms, CT scan results, etc.
- Health care provider/physician follows-up with the insurance company approximately 10 business days after submission to verify receipt and status of review
- If a health care provider tells you that a denial is received, check to see what appeal options are available. If the denial letter does not specify the appeal options, check your health insurance benefit book
- Work with your health care provider or a cochlear implant manufacturer for appeal until approved or until all appeal options are exhausted

Connecting to a world of sound

1 Outpatient surgery

Getting a cochlear implant is usually an outpatient surgery. The entire cochlear implant procedure takes about 1-3 hours. Thousands of these surgeries take place every year. Typically, the patient goes home later the same day. In some instances, the patient may stay overnight and be discharged early the following morning. Your surgeon will discuss with you the risks associated with the procedure. In terms of recovery time, you may find it surprising to learn that most children and adults are able to return to normal activities in less than a week.

2 Time to activate the cochlear implant

The external sound processor, which is worn on the ear, is typically activated within two to four weeks after surgery. This delay in activation allows for healing time. Once activated, everyone's initial experience with a cochlear implant is unique. Most cochlear implant users say that the sound changes over time and gets better every day. Daily practice and listening patience are essential for success.

At the initial activation appointment, your audiologist will program the device to match your hearing needs. Fine-tuning your settings will likely take more than one session with the audiologist.

3 Some devices offer customizable sound programming

Most sound processors offer a setting that you can use as your primary program. In addition, some devices offer a range of programmable listening options that can be adjusted to optimize sounds for different listening environments with a simple push of a button. This way, you can change the settings on the external processor to adjust for noisy or quiet environments as well as for music. While you might need only one program at the start, your hearing needs are likely to change in the future.

4 Ongoing care for your lifetime

People often ask about what happens after the cochlear implant is activated. Important considerations when choosing a cochlear implant system include the availability of technical support from the manufacturer and the length and coverage of product warranties. It is important for you to be confident knowing you will have ongoing care for the rest of your life.

Rehabilitation post-cochlear implantation should be standard procedure. A comprehensive rehabilitation program can assist a recipient with using the auditory signal and naturally adapting the technology toward supporting all types of communication, including listening and speaking.

Although the technology provides much greater access to sound than recipients may have had before, they may still need assistance in learning to recognize environmental sounds, comprehending speech, and improving their hearing abilities in challenging listening situations.

Some manufacturers offer specialized rehabilitation tools for music and telephone. There are a variety of rehabilitation resources and tools available. Visit your cochlear implant manufacturer website to learn more about their offerings.

Answers to frequently asked questions

Q How will it sound when I get my cochlear implant?

A It is difficult to explain what your experience will be like. Having a cochlear implant is a journey and it takes time for the brain to adjust to this new way of hearing sound. Electrical stimulation produces a sound that is different from normal hearing. Personal factors will affect your overall experience, such as your hearing history before the cochlear implant. Some familiar sounds may seem strange or harsh at first, and you may have to reshape the way you experience them. It's important, at first, to record how you feel and what sounds are good, not good or unpleasant to you. You and your audiologist can work together to get the best outcome for you. Research shows that people who have received a cochlear implant after wearing hearing aids for many years believe that their quality of life has improved as a result of attaining better hearing with a cochlear implant.¹¹

Q How complicated is the cochlear implant sound processor to use?

A Using a cochlear implant sound processor should be very similar to using a hearing aid. Some cochlear implant systems allow you to customize your own experience based on your needs and comfort level. Depending on the device, you may have the option to remain on one setting or to use different settings to achieve better listening in different environments.

Q Am I too old to get a cochlear implant?

A As long as there are no medical contraindications, the FDA has approved implantation in children 12 months of age or older, and there is no upper age limit for adults.

Cochlear implants have been demonstrated to have a significant, positive impact on the health and general quality of life of seniors with significant hearing loss.¹¹ For seniors living alone or for those with poor vision, the restoration of hearing provided by a cochlear implant can be critical to their ability to live independently. The isolation that often accompanies significant hearing loss may be mitigated or eliminated because cochlear implant recipients once again enjoy social, cultural or educational activities that would otherwise be difficult or impossible. For the appropriate candidate, a cochlear implant often provides dramatic listening improvements.

Q Will the cochlear implant further damage my inner ear?

A Cochlear implant design is an important consideration when protecting residual hearing is a concern. Some implants are designed to help protect the delicate cochlear structures of the ear.¹²⁻¹⁴ Ask your doctor about which cochlear implant is best for you.

Q Will insurance cover the cost?

A Unlike traditional hearing aids, a cochlear implant is covered by 90% of insurance companies. Medicare and Medicaid cover implantation for appropriate candidates. Please see page 23 for detailed information about cochlear implants and insurance coverage. The average maintenance cost for items such as batteries is similar to that of high-powered hearing aids.

Q Will I be able to listen to music?

A Yes, many recipients do report enjoying music with a cochlear implant. But it is important to know that music enjoyment is often different for each individual. Many who have a cochlear implant report being able to enjoy music right away, while others enjoy music only after practicing daily for awhile. Rehabilitation and practice have been shown to improve music enjoyment. When evaluating cochlear implants, you may want to consider a cochlear implant with a specialized music setting designed to enhance musical enjoyment. Talk to your audiologist about music enjoyment with a cochlear implant.

Q Will I be able to hear on the phone?

A Many people can hear on the phone with time and practice. Some companies offer telephone-specific rehabilitation programs to help you get started with telephone communications. There are also numerous accessories to help improve your listening experience on the phone if you need extra help. Visit your cochlear implant manufacturer's website to see what programs are offered.

Q How noticeable is the cochlear implant sound processor on the ear?

A Today's sound processors are designed to be as small and discreet as possible. They come in a variety of colors to match hair. The sound processor is somewhat larger than a very small hearing aid. However, it is generally comparable in size to larger high-powered hearing aids needed by those with severe-to-profound hearing loss. An additional benefit of a cochlear implant is that an earmold is not required. Also, unlike hearing aids, cochlear implants do not produce feedback. Many users report that these are wonderful side benefits.

Q Will I be able to wash my hair, take a shower or swim?

A Yes, as long as you remove the sound processor beforehand. Some cochlear implant sound processors are certified to be water resistant and have an IP44 rating so that you can still participate in enjoyable moments on the beach and around a swimming pool. However, sound processors are not intended for swimming.

Philip G., cochlear implant user

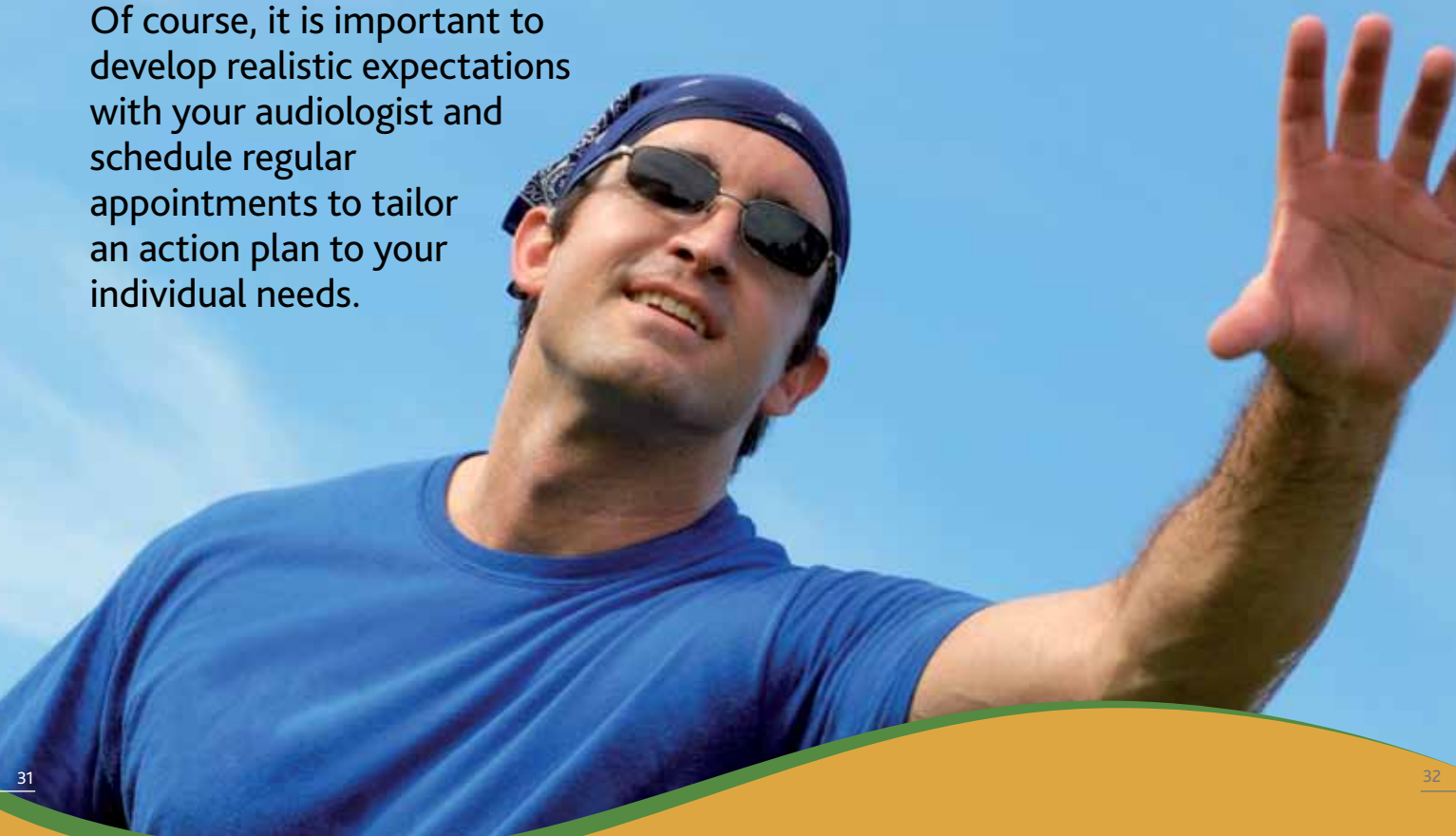


Helping you achieve your personal best

Your long-term success depends largely on finding the right cochlear implant system, the right team of hearing health care professionals, consistent practice and rehabilitation, a positive attitude and encouragement. Of course, it is important to develop realistic expectations with your audiologist and schedule regular appointments to tailor an action plan to your individual needs.

“It is the singular miracle of my life.”

Jack B., cochlear implant user



Reaching the right decision for your needs

Below is a summary of key information to guide you toward the right decision.

1 Research your options

Many adults and children with severe to profound hearing loss may benefit from a cochlear implant. Answer the questions featured on page three to determine whether you are a potential candidate. Then discuss your options with your hearing health care professional team.

2 Learn more about cochlear implant systems

Visit www.hearingloss.org for a list of cochlear implant manufacturers.

Make an informed decision

3 Evaluate information about reliability, performance and reputation of each cochlear implant manufacturer. You need to be able to trust that the decision you make will be the right one for you. That's why it's important to ask experts like your audiologist or cochlear implant surgeon about the track record of each device manufacturer. Not only do you want a device that will last a lifetime, you want a dependable and reputable manufacturer that will support you well into the future.

Resources

Organizations & Support

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

National professional organization which provides general information about hearing loss, hearing aids, assistive listening devices and audiology/speech-language pathology services.

2200 Research Boulevard | Rockville, MD 20850-3289
301.296.5700 | www.asha.org

American Academy of Audiology

The Academy is the world's largest professional organization of, by, and for audiologists. The Academy promotes quality hearing and balanced care by advancing the profession of audiology through leadership, advocacy, education, public awareness and support of research.

11730 Plaza America Drive, #300 | Reston, VA 20190
800.222.2336 | infoaud@audiology.org | www.audiology.org

American Academy of Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery

The world's largest organization representing specialists who treat the ear, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. The medical disorders treated by these physicians are among the most common that afflict all Americans, young and old.

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Hearing Loss Association of America

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is a non-profit, consumer organization that opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, advocacy and support. HLAA publishes the bimonthly *Hearing Loss Magazine*, holds annual conventions, produces the national Walk4Hearing, hosts online learning, and advocates for the rights for people with hearing loss. HLAA has chapters nationwide.

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NOTE

Use this guide to weigh all your options before taking the next step. Talk to long-time cochlear implant recipients and hearing health care professionals in your area, and see which device fits you best. You're taking the right steps toward an important decision.