



Cochlear[®]

Hear now. And always



Inspired by a lifetime of hearing outcomes

Candidate guide to cochlear
implant surgery

Better hearing can help provide you with the opportunity to reach your full potential. Whether you have lived with hearing loss for years and relied on hearing aids, or you have received a recent diagnosis, selecting the best hearing treatment can help you enjoy more of what you love.

If you have been diagnosed with moderately severe to profound hearing loss in one or both ears, a cochlear implant is designed to restore access to missing sounds, helping to improve sound clarity, hearing in noise and quality of life. While surgery is required for a cochlear implant, the long-lasting benefits can be life changing.

This guide is designed to help you understand the steps involved in receiving a cochlear implant, from the surgical assessment to hearing with a cochlear implant.

“

I literally drove in not being able to hear the radio, and then drove home listening to Richard Glover on the radio. It was beyond my wildest dreams that I'd be able to hear like this...

Kay, Cochlear™ implant recipient

”





6 steps to receiving a cochlear implant

1 The surgical assessment

To determine suitability for a cochlear implant, your ENT Specialist will:

- Determine whether you are fit for surgery
- Refer for medical imaging, e.g. MRI and/or CT scan to evaluate the inner ear anatomy
- Request a vestibular function assessment (if indicated)
- Review the risks of surgery
- Provide counselling on the surgical considerations, including implantation and post-operative follow-up

2 Preparing for surgery

The cochlear implant procedure is a routine surgery with an overnight stay for most individuals.. Your surgeon will conduct a pre-surgical examination to ensure you are healthy for the procedure. If you take prescription medication, discuss with your medical team what you should take on the day of surgery.

Support person at the hospital

We recommend you have someone at the hospital on the day of surgery to support you, help you to communicate and ease anxieties you may have as you wait for your procedure. If you use a hearing aid, there may be times when you are not able to use it.

There may also be times when the surgical team members are talking to you with masks covering their mouths, making it difficult if you rely on lip-reading.

Support getting home

You will need someone to drive you home after surgery. We recommend they help get you settled in at home, ensure any prescriptions you may have received are filled, and help you get started on your recovery instructions.

If you have any questions or concerns about your upcoming surgery, don't hesitate to contact your medical team.

3 Surgery day

The surgery may take one to three hours, with additional time in the preparation and recovery areas. The surgery is typically performed under general anaesthesia.

The surgery

- During the operation, a small area of hair may be shaved around the incision site.
- The surgeon will make a small incision behind the ear.
- An opening is made in the mastoid bone, so the surgeon can view the natural opening into the cochlea (inner ear).
- The internal device, called the implant, is placed under the skin. The electrode array is inserted into the cochlea.
- The surgeon closes the incision and places a dressing and compression bandage on your head.

4 After surgery

Depending on your situation and your surgeon's preference, you may stay in hospital overnight. Your surgeon will make specific recommendations regarding your post-operative care.

This may include:

- Instructions on how to care for your bandage and incision site
- Advice regarding any medications you take
 - When you can resume everyday activities

Recovery time

Most people are back to their normal routine in a few days and return to work one to two weeks after surgery. Your surgeon will give you advice specific to your personal circumstances.

Your surgeon will schedule a post-operative appointment to check on your recovery and progress.



Did you know that there is no upper age limit to receiving a cochlear implant?¹

Older adults who have received a cochlear implant show improvements in quality of life and speech understanding similar to younger adult cochlear implant recipients.



5 Activation

Your implant will transmit sound once your sound processor is fitted and programmed.

Your surgeon and audiologist will decide when your cochlear implant activation appointment will be.

If you were using two hearing aids prior to surgery, continue to use your hearing aid on your non-implanted ear.

At your appointment, your audiologist will program your sound processor, walk you through device care and management and support you as you begin to listen with your cochlear implant.



We know you may have questions and concerns as you get ready for hearing with a Cochlear Implant. The Cochlear Engagement Team is on hand to answer all of your questions and guide you through the process. Speak to one of our experts today.



Call: 1800 875 212



SMS: 0447 243 454



hearinghelp@cochlear.com

6 Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation refers to the process of acclimatising and learning to listen to the sound from the cochlear implant.

What does it 'sound' like?

It can take days or weeks of practice for your brain to adjust and understand the sounds you have been missing. Remember, your new hearing technology does not amplify sound like a hearing aid—it delivers sound in a new way. While sounds may be different, it is important to remember that the more you wear your cochlear implant sound processor, the more natural sounds will become.

Sound perception at initial activation of a cochlear implant can vary from person to person. Some people describe beeps or buzzes and whilst others are able to decipher some speech sounds. The 'pitch' or quality of the sound may be different to what you have heard before but will become more familiar the more you listen with the implant.

What does your rehabilitation journey look like?

You will be encouraged to wear the sound processor all waking hours to ensure the improvement in sound quality happens as quickly as possible.

Your audiologist may give you some listening tasks or goals to work towards when using your cochlear implant. This will assist you in adjusting to hearing sounds in your environment that you have not heard in a very long time, or haven't ever heard before.

As you begin to explore your new world of sound, we're here to provide the tools and resources you may need along the way.





Did you know you could be fully funded for cochlear device costs?

- **Private Health Insurance** may cover the full cost of cochlear implants and sound processors. Check with your health insurance provider to see if you are covered.
- **State Governments** fund the full cost of cochlear implants and sound processors for many adults each year.
- **Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)** may cover up to 100% of costs associated with cochlear implants, including sound processor upgrades.



Scan here to watch Cochlear™ implant recipients discuss the surgery

Hear now. And always

Cochlear is dedicated to helping people with moderate to profound hearing loss experience a world full of hearing. As the global leader in implantable hearing solutions, we have provided more than 700,000 devices and helped people of all ages to hear and connect with life's opportunities.

We aim to give people the best lifelong hearing experience and access to next generation technologies. We collaborate with leading clinical, research and support networks to advance hearing science and improve care.

That's why more people choose Cochlear than any other hearing implant company.

Reference

1. (Vermeire K, Brokx JP, Wuyts FL, Cochet E, Hofkens A, Van de Heyning PH. Quality-of-life benefit from cochlear implantation in the elderly. *Otol Neurotol.* 2005 Mar;26(2):188-95. doi: 10.1097/00129492-200503000-00010. PMID: 15793403.

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Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always follow the directions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information. In Australia, Cochlear™ Nucleus® implant systems are intended for the treatment of moderately severe to profound hearing loss. For Cochlear™ Nucleus® systems: This product is not available for purchase by the general public. For information on funding and reimbursement please contact your healthcare professional. Views expressed are those of the individual. Consult your health professional to determine if you are a candidate for Cochlear technology. Views expressed are those of the individual.

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