

COCHLEAR IMPLANT — INITIAL ASSESSMENT AVAILABLE IN BALLARAT WITH MR. BENJAMIN WEI

COCHLEAR IMPLANT CLINIC INFORMATION

Mr Benjamin Wei visiting Medical Specialist at ear nose throat Ballarat is available to see patients for initial assessment for Cochlear Implant.

The Cochlear Implant Clinic is part of the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, operating since 1984, and has a large team of ENT surgeons, including Mr Benjamin Wei.

There is a fee for the appointment and initial assessment with Mr Wei in Ballarat, however, Cochlear implant surgery and the prosthesis is fully funded by the Government for public Medicare eligible patients and by private health insurance companies for private patients.

If Mr Wei assesses the patient is a potential candidate for Cochlear Implant further preoperative appointments at the Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital will involve thorough ENT investigations, complete audiological assessment and counselling so all hearing options including all surgical options will be explored. If a Cochlear implant is recommended patients will be assessed for anaesthetic risk.

While a cochlear implant does not provide 'normal' hearing, when recommended, 75% of people have a SIGNIFICANT improvement in the implanted ear. Median outcomes for adult patients with an acquired hearing loss are 90% for sentences in quiet and 65% for sentences in noise.

Best outcomes are obtained for patients with acquired deafness or for infants implanted at a young age. The poorer hearing ear is usually implanted to preserve the better hearing on the other side. Many people use a combination of a hearing aid and a cochlear implant.

The Cochlear Implant is a system consisting of an internal implant requiring a 2 hour operation and usually a 1 night stay in hospital plus external device (sound processor) worn over the ear.

How a Cochlear Implant works

1. Microphones on the sound processor pick up sounds and the processor converts them into digital information.
2. This information is transferred through the coil via a magnet to the implant just under the skin.
3. The implant sends electrical signals down the electrode into the cochlea.
4. The electrode array in the cochlear picks up the signals and sends them to the brain giving the sensation of sound.



The Cochlear Implant is different to a traditional hearing aid because hearing aids can only amplify the remaining natural hearing, whilst an implant can provide electronic/artificial hearing for all sounds in the speech range and therefore restore clarity to speech.

Patients need to attend post-operative appointments for programming the device and rehabilitation and will require ongoing annual reviews.

GUIDELINES FOR REFERRING PATIENTS FOR COCHLEAR IMPLANT INITIAL ASSESSMENT

The following information may assist when considering making a referral to Mr Benjamin Wei for Cochlear Implant assessment. Mr Wei is happy to receive referrals for patients of any age.

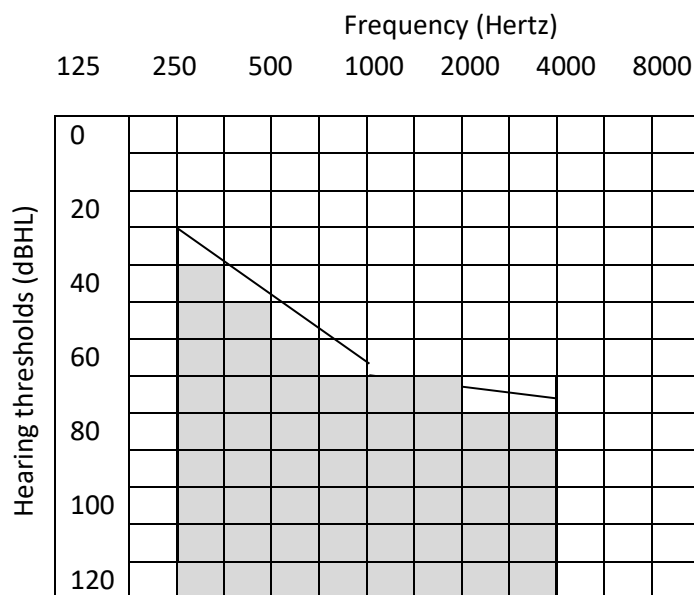
Candidacy criteria have changed dramatically over time due to progressively improving outcomes and advances in technology. Cochlear implants may now be considered for people who still are able to use hearing aids.

Referral Guidelines

The option of a Cochlear Implant can be considered if the patient has:

- A moderate to severe hearing loss in the poorer hearing ear, please see the audiogram below as an example.
- Limited speech recognition ability with hearing aids
 - ❖ Complain that people mumble or aren't speaking clearly
 - ❖ Rely on lip reading or other visual cues like subtitles
 - ❖ Have difficulty understanding people over the telephone
 - ❖ Avoid social gatherings because of the impact of noise

Have unaided hearing thresholds that fall into the regions indicated below



- Has trialled appropriate conventional hearing aids
- Would be fit enough to undergo a general anaesthesia
- Patients with chronic active ear disease may require additional management by the otologists with in the implant clinic
- Patients should be psychologically stable in order to participate in the assessment and rehabilitation programme
- Referrals are accepted for patients with congenital and acquired hearing losses
- Please refer children as early as possible

Urgent Referrals

- A referral is classified as 'urgent' if the following is identified
- Recent case of meningitis
- Recent sudden hearing loss (Audiogram required)
- Late diagnosis of severe-to-profound hearing loss in a child over 1 year of age

Referral Requirements

- Please ensure the following information is included in your referral.
- Patient demographic information and contact details and preferred contact person
- History and aetiology of hearing loss
- Relevant medical issues; especially issues that may increase the anaesthetic risk
- Summary of relevant test results; e.g. radiology, pathology, balance test
- A recent audiogram and or previous audiograms
- Referrer details including provider number

Please ensure all referrals are addressed to—

Mr. Benjamin Wei
ear nose throat Ballarat
103 Drummond St Nth
Ballarat, VIC 3350
Tel: 03 53334755
Fax: 03 53334733
Argus: 532717@argus.net.au

If you have any queries, please call us.