



## **COCHLEAR IMPLANT**

### **Risks and Complications of Cochlear Implant Surgery**

Your ear problems may be helped by a cochlear implant. As with any surgery there are not only benefits but also risks. You must keep in mind that you may not benefit from the surgery, and your hearing may be worse after surgery. The following information will help you understand the results and risks.

Dizziness: Temporary dizziness lasting up to 1 month occurs in up to 5% of patients, but permanent dizziness happens in only 1 out of 500 patients.

Ring: Ringing in the ear (tinnitus) is often present in patients with a hearing loss. Therefore, most patients already have some ringing before surgery. After surgery, ringing is usually less but can be worse and quite bothersome.

Facial Nerve Paralysis: An uncommon postoperative complication of ear surgery is temporary paralysis of one side of the face. This may occur as a result of an abnormality or a swelling of the nerve and usually subsides spontaneously. On very rare occasions, the nerve may be injured at the time of surgery or it may be necessary to excise it in order to eradicate infection. When this happens, a skin sensation nerve is removed from the upper part of the neck to replace the facial nerve. Paralysis of the face under these circumstances might last 6 months to a year, and there would be a permanent residual weakness. Eye complications, requiring treatment by a specialist, could develop.

Infection: Since the cochlear implant is a foreign object, infection and breakdown of the skin over the implant can occur. Typically, this can be managed with medications and wound care but at times can necessitate removal of the implant.

Hearing Result: You have been selected as being a reasonable candidate to receive benefit from a cochlear implant. It is impossible, however, to predict the hearing results that will be obtained. The implant in no way restores normal hearing to the ear but provides useful auditory information. The level of hearing benefit, will be directly dependent on your commitment and faithfulness to the postoperative programming appointments and rehabilitation program.

Our goal in performing a cochlear implant is to give you the best hearing possible with the least risk of failure but like other aspects of life, there are no guarantees of success. If by chance you have a bad result after surgery, we will do our best to treat the problem. Please let us or our staff know if you have any questions.