Cochlear Implant Program

OVERVIEW
A cochlear implant is a surgically implanted hearing device that is recommended for patients with hearing loss so severe that they do not benefit from traditional hearing aids. The implanted portion consists of a receiver and an electrode array. The electrode array is inserted into the cochlea, the organ of hearing in the inner ear. The receiver is placed behind the ear on the mastoid bone just under the skin. The external portion, called a speech processor, is held in place over the receiver by a magnet. The processor is either a behind-the-ear device similar to a hearing aid, or a body-worn device. Microphones on the processor pick up sound and the processor changes that acoustic energy into electrical energy. These signals are sent from the external processor to the receiver under the skin, which in turn sends signals to the electrode array. The electrodes in the inner ear stimulate the hearing nerve and send signals to the brain. In this way, the cochlear implant bypasses severe damage in the inner ear to enable patients to hear differently.

The first step is to have a complete audiometric evaluation and a medical exam with Dr. Langman. Dependent on the test results and the physician’s exam, you may be referred to the CI Audiologist for further evaluation.

CI EVALUATION
During the CI evaluation, you will undergo sound field testing (through speakers) in the sound treated test booth while wearing hearing aids. The test battery may include sentence and word tests in quiet and noise.

TEST RESULTS
Following the CI evaluation, you and anyone accompanying you will receive the test results and explanation of the results, an overview of the available Cochlear Implant devices, the features of each device, and the advantages and disadvantages of these devices. Additionally you’ll receive information regarding what to expect from the cochlear implant, the advantages of cochlear implants versus hearing aids, and the process associated with future cochlear implant appointments.

EXPECTATIONS
You and a family member will receive an Expectations Questionnaire to take home and complete. This helps ensure you are prepared for the process involved with learning to listen with a cochlear implant. Hearing through a cochlear implant differs significantly from hearing through hearing aids and it can take time and effort for you to reach your full potential with the implant.

You will also make an appointment with Dr. Langman to discuss surgery and meet with the medical assistant to determine insurance coverage and set up appropriate scans per Dr. Langman.

RETURN VISIT
On the day of your follow-up appointment with Dr. Langman to discuss surgery, you and your family member will meet with the CI audiologist to review the Expectations Questionnaire. At this appointment you and the CI Audiologist will order your choice of cochlear implant and accessories. The surgery date will be scheduled with the medical assistant.

ACTIVATION
After Dr. Langman determines that you can proceed with CI programing (usually within six weeks of surgery) you will have an activation appointment with the CI Audiologist. This initial visit will be approximately 2 hours with subsequent visits of 1.5 hours. Initially you can expect to return in 3-4 week intervals and later 6-12 month intervals depending on the rate of progress and your needs.