Who is a candidate?

Profoundly deaf infants may be screened in the second half of their first year of life and implanted at twelve months of age.

Older children and adults with severe to profound hearing loss who do not receive substantial benefit from hearing aids may also be candidates.

What are the expected outcomes?

Virtually all implant recipients benefit from increased environmental sound awareness and improved communication through auditory and visual cues. Depending on the age at implantation, the communication skills of the individual, and the motivation of the family, over half of the recipients become orally conversant and some can even communicate by telephone.

What is the process?

Families of individuals interested in receiving a cochlear implant can visit our website at www.umcent.com and download an application. They can also contact the Cochlear Implant Team at the Department of Otolaryngology and Communicative Sciences at the University of Mississippi Medical Center by calling (601) 984-5160 to have an application mailed. Once we receive the completed application, the candidate or family will be contacted for evaluation.

Cochlear implant evaluation consists of testing with the audiologist and speech-language pathologist, as well as meeting with a social worker. The families are counseled that the implant is not a "magic bullet" that will instantly restore hearing, and rehabilitation is essential to success. Those who are deemed candidates and demonstrate realistic expectations as well as a commitment to fully participate in the rehabilitation process will then meet with the surgeon and undergo a CT scan of the temporal bones.

What happens after the surgery?

The implantation surgery lasts about two hours and is done as an outpatient or as an overnight stay. Intraoperative testing is usually done to check the integrity of the device and at what stimulus level the cochlear nerve is stimulated.

About a month later, initial programming is done. Multiple sessions are required to "fine-tune" the processing and stimulus level of the implant.

The recipient also has multiple visits with a speech-language pathologist to assess progress and work on ongoing therapy. Pre-lingually deaf recipients are encouraged to enroll in an oral school for the deaf, or participate in oral classes as much as possible.

Background

On April 30, 2003, the first cochlear implantation at the University of Mississippi Medical Center was performed on a three year-old girl with congenital deafness. Since then, the State's only teaching hospital has been proud to provide this gift of hearing to over 70 individuals age 9 months to 75 years.

This achievement was possible through the hard work and dedication of the cochlear implant team at UMMC, and the support of the administration in the Hospital and the Medical School.

With the opening of the operating rooms at Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital and the upcoming Pediatric Outpatient Center, we are happy to provide convenient and integrated management of pediatric hearing and communication disorders for the State of Mississippi.

Cochlear Implant Team Members

Jeffrey Carron, M.D., F.A.A.P., F.A.C.S.
Dr. Carron completed medical school at Tulane, followed by a residency in Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery at Eastern Virginia Medical School. He then did a fellowship in Pediatric Otolaryngology at the University of Washington in Seattle. His clinical interests include pediatric otology and cochlear implants, cleft palate, pediatric speech disorders, velopharyngeal insufficiency, airway and sinus disorders, and routine pediatric ear, nose, and throat disorders.

Thomas Eby, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Dr. Eby received his medical degree from the University of Wisconsin, and completed his Otolaryngology training with the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary at Harvard Medical School. He then did fellowships in otopathology at Mass Eye and Ear with Dr. Harold Schuknecht and Neurotology with Dr. Ugo Fisch in Zurich. He was on the faculty at UAB for 19 years, and recently joined the faculty at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

Kathy Irving, Au.D., CCC-A
Dr. Irving received her Master's Degree from Louisiana State University. She worked at Magnolia Speech School from 1999-2003, where her primary jobs were audiological assessment of the 0-3 population and aural rehabilitation of implanted children.

Lara Monico, M.S., CCC-SLP
Ms. Monico received her Master's Degree in Communicative Disorders from LSU and is a Certified Auditory-Verbal Therapist. She has spent over 10 years in clinic and school settings working with children with hearing aids or cochlear implants using auditory-oral or auditory-verbal approach.

Twila Rawson, Ph.D.
Dr. Rawson obtained her doctorate in Developmental Psychology at the University of Southern Mississippi and is a participant in the Child Development Center at UMMC.

Suzanne Roark, Au.D., CCC-A
Dr. Roark obtained her Master's Degree in Audiology from the University of Mississippi. She has been at the University of Mississippi Medical Center since 1992, working primarily with the pediatric population.

Mindy Ware, M.S., CCC-A
Ms. Ware graduated from Ole Miss and received her master's degree from the University of South Alabama. Her practice is primarily with children.

The Cochlear Implant Center

The University of Mississippi Medical Center

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