

# COCHLEAR IMPLANT SURGERY

## What happens during surgery?

During surgery, the doctor made a cut behind your child's ear. The doctor goes through a small opening in the skull to put the cochlear implant electrodes into the cochlea. These connect to the part of the implant placed under the skin behind the ear.

- There will be stitches under your child's skin behind their ear.
- The stitches will dissolve on their own.
- The cut behind the ear will have steri-strips on it.
- The provider will remove these at your follow up appointment about 1 week after surgery.

## When will my child be able to use the implant?

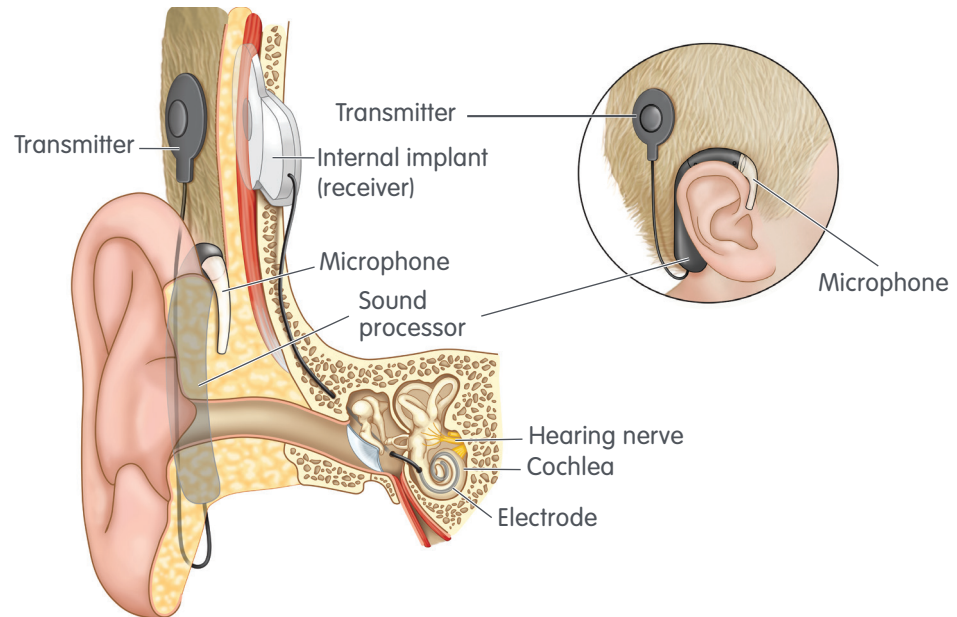
You will see the audiologist 2 to 3 weeks after surgery to turn on the implant.

- They will give your child a sound and speech processor to wear on their head.
- The processor connects to the implant under the scalp with a magnet.

## What to expect after surgery

It's common for your child to have some of these symptoms after surgery:

- Swelling of the skin behind the ear or ears where the implant is placed.
  - » This might cause the ear or ears to stick out.
  - » The ear or ears will go back to their normal spot when the swelling goes down after 1 to 4 weeks.



- » Elevate your child's head while they are sleeping for 2 to 3 days. This will help with swelling.
- » Your child may be uncomfortable laying on the side with the implant for a few days.

- Bruising above the eyes and around the corner of the mouth.
  - » Tiny needles are used to check the nerves in the face during surgery. This can cause bruising.
- Mild to moderate pain for 2 to 3 days.
- Dizziness for up to 3 days.
- Changes in how things taste.
  - » The taste nerve can get irritated during surgery. This can cause changes in how things taste. This usually goes back to normal.
- Nausea.
- Vomiting (usually only happens in the first hours after surgery).
- A small amount of blood may drip out of the nose.

## Home Care

The doctor will give you instructions on when and how to take off the bandages.

- Your child will have a dressing that wraps around their head. You can take this off 24 hours after the surgery.
- There are steri-strips on the cut behind your child's ear.
  - » Keep these dry.
  - » The provider will take them off at your follow-up visit.
  - » After the doctor takes off the steri-strips, you can carefully clean the area with soap and water while your child takes a bath or shower.
- Give medicine exactly as directed by your doctor.
- If the doctor gave a prescription for pain medicine:
  - » This is a narcotic with the right dose for your child based on how much they weigh.
  - » Follow the instructions when giving the prescribed pain medication. Giving too much can cause trouble breathing, nausea, and constipation.
  - » Only give this medicine if your child is having pain that does not get better with over-the-counter medicine like ibuprofen and acetaminophen (Tylenol).
  - » Do not wake your child to give them the prescription pain medicine because it can make them too sleepy.
- If the doctor did not prescribe pain medicine, you can give an over-the-counter medicine for pain like ibuprofen or acetaminophen.
  - » Follow the dose directions on the box.
- The doctor will tell you when your child can return to school, childcare or other activities.
  - » They cannot do any rough activities (PE, recess, sports, rough play) for 2 weeks.
- Make sure your child stays up to date on their vaccines, especially the pneumococcal and Haemophilus influenzae vaccines.
  - » Your child should get a flu vaccine every year.
  - » Do not get any vaccines the 2 weeks before surgery.



## Call (816) 234-3040 or message ENT using the patient portal if your child has:

- Nausea and/or vomiting for more than 24 hours after the surgery.
- Fever higher than 102F (38.9C).
- Redness, drainage, or swelling from the incision.
- If the incision is not staying together with the steri-strips.
- Ear or head pain that does not get better with pain medicine.

## Go to the Emergency Department if your child:

- Seems confused.
- Has a stiff neck, bad headache, and fever and is sensitive to light.
- Has face weakness on the side of surgery.



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