

# COME HEAR

Welcome to “Come Hear,” a free newsletter distributed by the Maryland Cochlear Implant Center of Excellence (MCICE, pronounced “em-cise”). We hope to provide cochlear implant recipients and their families with the most up-to-date news about research on cochlear implants, new features in technology, and how to get the greatest benefit from an implant. We are a group of researchers, educators, surgeons, and clinical service providers located at the University of Maryland - College Park, University of Maryland-Baltimore School of Medicine, and the University of Maryland Medical Center. Our goal is to provide the nation with evidence-based, unbiased information that can help when deciding if a cochlear implant is the right choice for you or a loved one.

## Providing services to the community during COVID-19

University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) and the UMD Hearing and Speech Clinic and taking precautions in order to maintain safety procedures during unprecedented times. Both UMMC and UMD are offering **no-contact curbside device checks** (hearing aids and cochlear implants), **limited clinic scheduling** for urgent cases, and **remote programming** of hearing aids, when possible. The safety of our patients is the top priority at this moment. As events progress, and with continued guidance from the CDC, our offices will fully re-open once it is safe to do so.

## Rehabilitation Services for Adult CI patients

The University of Maryland Hearing and Speech Clinic plans to host a *free Cochlear Implant Support Group* this coming fall. The two-hour session will be designed for new and experienced users to discuss and have questions answered about equipment, CI handling, and rehabilitation. There will also be opportunities to engage in exercises geared to help users improve how they hear with CIs. After group practice, suggestions for continued practice at home will be provided. Each CI user is encouraged to bring a family member or friend with them. The support group will be informational, collaborative, and accommodating. If you know someone who may be interested, spread the word! Specific information regarding dates and times will be coming soon. Contact: [mcice@umd.edu](mailto:mcice@umd.edu) if interested.

## Mpower Day!



Mpower, a state-funded initiative, unites the strengths of the University of Maryland campuses in College Park and Baltimore to create programs designed to facilitate interdisciplinary care, education, research, and services for the community. Mpower Day provides an opportunity for these collaborative programs to advocate for support from State legislature and to demonstrate the benefits of these ventures. The Maryland Cochlear Implant Center for Excellence (MCICE) is proud to be represented among such collaborative programs. Postdoctoral student Bobby Gibbs, Audiology student Amara Ezenwa, and board members Nicole Nguyen and Matt Goupell represented MCICE at this exposition.

## Meet the students of the Cochlear Implant Emphasis Program (CI-EP)!

MCICE is pleased to welcome the inaugural cohort of the CI-EP.



**Amara Ezenwa**, Clinical Audiology (CAUD) student: “I’m excited for the opportunity to receive specialized and advanced information education in cochlear implants that will set me apart as a clinician in the future.”



**Sarah Weinstein**, Clinical Audiology (CAUD) student: “After taking an undergraduate cochlear implant course, I was hooked! I applied for the CI-EP because I was confident my clinical interests would be met through this innovative program.”



**Elisa Rademacher**, Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) student: “My interest in studying language development in children with cochlear implants began when my son Liam received his cochlear implants in 2016. I’m so excited for the opportunity to further my education through participation in the CI-EP.”

## Ask an Expert

### ***Why do cochlear implant device failures happen, and what should I do about it if they do?***

Cochlear implants are complex electrical and mechanical devices, and like any other device they can break. This is actually very uncommon, with breakage rates much lower than almost any of the other devices we can buy on our own in stores, and lower than many if not most other medical devices. In one recent study only 3% of nearly 100 cochlear implants had to be removed over a 10-year period because they broke. Overall the device survival rates for 5, 10, and 15 years were 98.2%, 97.7%, and 94.9%, respectively, but those numbers include other issues that arose too besides breaking.<sup>1</sup> How many of us have ever bought a car, smartphone or toaster oven that lasted 15 years without needing repairs!? Yet nearly 95% of cochlear implants will be working just fine 15 years later, and probably much longer than that too. By way of comparison, this is a much higher rate of durability than what is seen with hip replacements and pacemakers, for example.

There can also be cochlear implant recalls. These are also very uncommon, and usually happen when some flaw is observed in a newer device. It is important to recognize that these flaws very rarely result in danger or injury to the user. There was a device recall in the late 1990’s and early 2000’s where one implanted device accessory was found to run a higher risk of meningitis, but that is very rare. Most recalls happen when it is observed that there is a higher than usual rate of the device failing. This was the case with a recent recall from one company, but even then, as of earlier this year the number of devices that broke was less than one-half of one percent.<sup>1</sup> These failures are usually noticed because users observe decreased performance of their device. Importantly, studies have shown that people who have a new cochlear implant placed after their first one failed usually do very well.<sup>1</sup> In fact, if you end up getting a newer generation device, you might even notice added benefit.

If you hear about a recall you should not worry. If your device is working normally it is likely that there is nothing you will need to do. If you are concerned about poor performance with your cochlear implant speak with your Audiologist and let them test the device. If it is not working properly then a new device might be a good option for you.

<sup>1</sup> Kim SY, Kim MB, Chung W, Cho Y, Hong SH, Moon JJ. Evaluating Reasons for Revision Surgery and Device Failure Rates in Patients Who Underwent Cochlear Implantation Surgery. JAMA Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg. Published online March 05, 2020. doi:10.1001/jamaoto.2020.0030

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20200220006001/en/Advanced-Bionics-Announces-Voluntary-Field-Corrective-Action>

<sup>1</sup> Batuk MO, Cinar BC, Yarali M, Bajin MD, Sennaroglu G, Sennaroglu L. Twenty years of experience in revision cochlear implant surgery: signs that indicate the need for revision surgery to audiologists [published online ahead of print, 2019 Sep 16]. J Laryngol Otol. 2019;1-5. doi:10.1017/S0022215119001919

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