A cochlear implant bypasses the damaged parts of the inner ear by stimulating auditory nerve fibers directly. A cochlear implant is an electronic device that is surgically implanted in the inner ear that works in conjunction with external equipment worn behind the ear. Although cochlear implants do not restore natural hearing, most individuals with cochlear implants have achieved significant gains in sound awareness and speech understanding. Cochlear implants have been approved for those with a moderate-to-profound hearing loss in both ears, who receive limited benefit from hearing aids. If there are no medical contraindications candidates of any age may be implanted.

This is about a 45 minutes to 1 hour outpatient procedure; you will usually be released to go home later that day. Recovery from surgery generally is 5-7 days.

We wait 3 weeks before activating the device due to swelling. When the device is activated, we begin a course of rehabilitation once a week for five weeks.

**Medications**

**Pain medication:** Take this as prescribed only on an as needed basis. Do not drive or operate machinery while using narcotics, Avoid taking medication on an empty stomach. You may receive better pain relief by alternating the narcotic pain medicine with up to 800MG of Ibuprofen every 4 hours as needed, or Tylenol 500-1000MG every 6 hours as needed.

**Antibiotic:** Start the antibiotic the evening you go home from surgery and take until the prescription is finished. Avoid taking on an empty stomach.

**After-Care**

Remove the ear dressing the following day after surgery. Clean any dried blood with hydrogen peroxide and then apply antibiotic ointment. Keep the incision dry when showering or bathing for 1 week after surgery. Do not pick, pull, rub or scratch your sutures or incision. Always wash your hands before and after contact with incision. Your sutures are dissolvable and will begin to fall out 1-2 weeks after surgery.

Avoid lying on the operative ear for 1 week after surgery.

No strenuous activity for 1-2 weeks. Do not travel on an airplane for 2 weeks.

Call the office if you have a temperature over 100.3, your incision is red, swollen or coming apart, you have excessive drainage from your ear or incision, clear fluid draining from you rear, incision or nose. Do not wait until your next office appointment to report any problems or questions. The office number is 314-453-0001 and the after-hours exchange is 314-364-5323.