

John Powell's Cochlear Implant Testimonial

I started losing my hearing as a child and finally, when I was a freshman in high school at the age of 15, I got my first set of hearing aids. They fit on the temples of my glasses, although at the time I did not need glasses to see. The hearing aids were a big help, and the school offered a lip reading class, but my hearing kept decreasing. Two of us took the class and the lip reading was very helpful to pick up what people were saying.

My right ear kept getting worse over the years. I went through many sets of hearing aids at a great expense.

My greatest challenge before my Cochlear Implant, CI, was understanding people and communicating. It was very difficult, so I avoided social situations and felt isolated. Hearing aids required a lot of maintenance and expense, and I never really felt satisfied with their performance.

I decided to have a CI after talking with my audiologist, Laura Johnson, who helped to get a Cap-Tel caption phone for me. It was OK, although the captions were a little slow. Reading and listening at the same time takes a lot of getting use to, but it helps with communicating.

About the same time I saw a news story on TV about a man that got a CI, and because of the blue tooth microphone connection, was able to hear his daughter sing in Church for the first time at Christmas. This got me questioning Laura, my audiologist, and she set me up with ENT where I met Melissa, who has first hand knowledge about severe hearing loss.

I went through all the preliminary testing and met with Dr. Disher. I passed all the testing and was considered a good candidate for the Cochlear Implant. I was very excited! I had to update my Meningitis vaccinations, which took two rounds of shots. I also got a CT scan of the head to check my bone structure. Finally the surgery was set up and I was so anxious, and so was my family!!

The surgery took place at Luthern Hospital on Good Friday!!! During an out-patient surgery they implanted a magnet behind my right ear. The surgery was at 10:00 am and I was on my way home by 2:30.

The CI was activated on May 16th, my granddaughter's birthday! This activation let me hear sounds that I was not used to hearing. The sounds were magnified more than I was accustomed to and it took some adjusting on my part to get used to them. At my next appointment the CI was turned up so that I could hear voices more clearly and distinguish where they were coming from.

I find it difficult to determine what people that talking from a distance are saying. I am anticipating hearing the next level of sounds more clearly and hearing from more distance.

I am extremely satisfied with my Cochlear Implant and the whole experience has been life changing! My favorite sound that I hear now is "Dinner's Ready!" (ha,ha). I enjoy watching TV and my family really likes that the volume can be at a normal level.

I would highly recommend anyone thinking about a cochlear implant should investigate it. Ask lots of questions, talk to others, and come to the support meetings because fellow CI friends really do "support" you, and most of all don't be afraid. You will not only change your life, but the quality of life for your whole family.