



LISTEN UP!

**Johannesburg Cochlear Implant
News letter
Spring Edition 2012**

This year is speeding by and Spring is upon us once again. I hope you will find something of interest in this edition of our newsletter and we look forward to hearing from you regarding topics you would like us to cover in future editions.

JCIC ADMIN HOURS



We are pleased to inform you that Gadija Sallie has been appointed as our new secretary and office administrator. Gadija has been with us since the beginning of July and we hope that she will stay with us for many years to come. She is no stranger to cochlear implant as her son, Tawfeeq, who is 14 years old received an implant when he was two years old and attends a mainstream school in Johannesburg.

Our office will be open from Monday to Friday between 8:00am and 4:00pm. Please contact Gadija to book appointments and order batteries or spare parts. She is available at admin@jcic.co.za or 011 482-6141 or **011 356-6198 (new number)**.

OOPS!

When putting this edition together I noticed that the previous edition was dated 2011! Did anyone else spot the error? I apologise if it caused any confusion.

BATTERIES



We now stock three types of batteries: Power One at R330.00 and Rayovac Mercury Free at R250.00 which are provided by Southern ENT. In addition we stock ZeniPower batteries at R270.00. If you wish to purchase the ZeniPower you will need to pay JCIC when you collect them.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW RECIPIENTS

Congratulations and good luck to our recipients implanted since our last newsletter:



Adults: Bonga Langa;

Children: Dakota Wood; Blessing Sangweni; Yusra Ismail; Nazeefah Mohamed; Lindokhule Dladla.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR COCHLEAR IMPLANT (PART 2)



In the previous edition I discussed the care of your cochlear implant and using the controls to help you in difficult situations. In this edition we will look at strategies that you can use in difficult listening environments to aid communication.

The main factors that influence effective communication are the Environment; the Speaker and the Listener.

The Environment



Lighting – This may be too dim or there may be a glare. Ask the speaker to move into an area with better lighting so that you can use speech reading cues such as lip-reading, facial expressions and body language). Communication outside at night may be particularly difficult and having the confidence to be an assertive communicator and ask your communication partner to move into an area with better lighting will save both of you a lot of frustration.

Visual and auditory distractions can interfere so it is best to avoid things such as a flickering television in the background when trying to have a conversation. Room ventilation such as air conditioners can also be problematic and you should try to avoid standing right under one. When choosing a restaurant or a place for a meeting remember that carpets and soft furnishing reduce reverberation and create a more optimal environment for listening.

When going into a meeting try to get there early to ensure that you are sitting at the best distance and angle.

When going to the theatre or meetings ask whether there is a telecoil loop system available (unfortunately not many places in South Africa have this) or talk to your audiologist about assistive devices.

If someone starts talking to you from another room either go to the speaker or ask him to come to you before continuing the conversation.

The Speaker



There are some things that you cannot control such as the speaker's accent or facial hair. However by being an assertive communicator you can control certain aspects of the speaker's communication such as speed, mumbling or exaggerated lip movement, looking away, covering the mouth while speaking, chewing or smoking. A comment such as "I can lipread better if you lower your hand" is helpful because many people are unaware that they are doing things that can impede communication.

The Listener



Learning to listen with your cochlear implant and identify the message in the presence of background noise may be very tiring. Discuss this problem with your audiologist who may be able to make some fine adjustments in your MAPPING session that will help you to cope better in noise.

Concentration is essential. If you, as the listener, feel tired or ill and are not motivated to hear the communication will break down. Everyone experiences times when they are distracted or not interested in the topic being discussed. This is different to the times when you miss out on an interesting conversation because you are a passive listener who lacks the confidence to use strategies to help you hear.



When you don't catch something ask the speaker to repeat or rephrase.

When joining in a conversation ask someone for the topic or a brief summary of what is being discussed. It is always easier to fill in words that you miss if you know the topic of conversation. It helps to keep up with current events, read the synopsis of a play or movie before going to see it or get the agenda in advance before attending a meeting.

Ask questions to clarify that you heard correctly.

Try to get the idea of the conversation rather than trying to catch every word.

If someone is giving you important information such as an address or telephone number ask him to write it down (or put it on your phone, iPod or other electronic device!)

Listening Skills

1. Sit up.
2. Look interested.
3. Lean forward.
4. Listen.
5. Act interested.
6. Nod your head to show that you are tuned in.
7. Track the speaker with your eyes.

Try to relax and enjoy the interaction!

Acknowledgements:

1. MedEl How to make more out of my cochlear implant.
2. Improving Understanding with Communication Strategies. (Material based on two HOPE Online seminars www.CochlearAmericas.com/HOPE.) This article has some good suggestions for going to a restaurant and communicating in a car.

20th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



As mentioned in the previous newsletter the Johannesburg Cochlear Implant Programme started 20 years ago in 1992.

We have started off our celebrations with two events.

Cocktail Party



On the 13th September the team members hosted a cocktail party for sponsors and referring agents as well as members of other implant teams in the country. It was an opportunity for the team to celebrate and share some of the wonderful outcomes with other professionals who do not always have the chance to see the end result. We were disappointed that the response from the medical aid companies was poor as we had hoped to be able to promote interest in cochlear implant and its funding! Despite this a good time was had by all and the team was freshly inspired to continue working in this very exciting field.

Thank you to Southern ENT and MedEl for sponsoring this event.

A Parent Information Morning was held on 15th September. This meeting was aimed at the families of young cochlear implant users and children due for implant or switch-on. Estelle Roberts and Wendy Deverson chatted to a group of about 40 parents about schooling, optimal use of the cochlear implant and hearing and effective therapy and parent involvement.

Despite the rain the information morning was well received and we hope to hold similar mornings three or four times a year. The contact details of the families who attended were shared so that people can make contact with each other without having to wait for another meeting. If you would like to join this group please contact Gadija and she will add your details to the list.

Recipient Get-together

It is not only the team members who need to celebrate our 20 years of cochlear implants in Johannesburg. Without the recipients there would be no need for a team! We had planned to have a picnic this year for our entire Cochlear Implant Family, but the year has sped by. We are a very diverse family and need to plan around school holidays and many different religious holidays as well as organising an event that can be enjoyed by all ages.

Our first recipient, Jorge Moreira, received his cochlear implant on the 18th January 1992 so we have decided to celebrate our 21st! January is a very busy month and many people are away at the beginning of the year so this event will take place in early February (we will confirm the date as soon as we have confirmed the availability of the venue). If you have any ideas regarding what would make this an enjoyable event for you and your family we would love to hear them and will try to incorporate them in our planning.

Don't forget to send in your comments, questions and suggestions and stories! Please share them with us at admin@jcc.co.za or 2711482-6141 and we will include them or reply to them in our next edition.