

## BONE ANCHORED HEARING AID (BAHA) INFORMATION SHEET

### MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COCHLEAR BAHA

#### What is a BAHA?

A BAHA or Bone Anchored Hearing Implant is a hearing assistive device for patients with largely conductive hearing loss or single sided deafness.

#### Who can benefit from a Cochlear Baha?

A Cochlear Baha can be an effective solution for people with the following hearing impairments:

1. Bilateral conductive hearing loss
2. Congenital ear malformations
3. Single sided deafness (SSD)
4. Hearing loss where air conduction hearing aids aren't an option due to chronic conditions of outer ear.

#### What benefit will I receive from a Cochlear Baha?

Baha is the only implanted hearing treatment that works through direct bone conduction by combining a sound processor with a small titanium implant placed behind the ear. The system allows sound to be conducted through the skull bypassing the ear canal and middle ear. This process is known as direct bone conduction. The device helps to overcome many of the drawbacks of a conventional bone conduction hearing aid by providing a direct transmission pathway to the cochlear.

#### Will I be able to hear music with a Cochlear Baha?

Many Baha recipients enjoy and appreciate music however there are many factors that influence progress such as prior experience with music, motivation and practice, as music is comprised of many complex sounds.

#### Will I have to limit my sports activity? How about swimming?

A Cochlear Baha will not limit your swimming or sports activity. For more active or contact sports, it is suggested that you wear a helmet to protect your equipment.

For swimming, you will need to remove the external component (much like a hearing aid). The abutment is not affected by water. However, without the external component, you will not be able to hear.

#### What accessories can be used with a Baha?

An audio accessories adaptor is available for the Baha that allows direct audio input. There are many other accessory options for the different Baha devices. It is best to discuss these options with your Baha professionals.

#### Are there any age restrictions to receiving a Baha?

It is best to discuss this with your hearing health professional, but bone quality is an important factor that needs to be considered. In general a BAHA in a patient over the age of 6 is safe.

### BAHA TECHNOLOGY

What about the future of Baha technology – will I be able to access it?

New sound processor technology will always be developed so that recipients with previous generation technology will be able to access and upgrade to these advances. The technology is built into the external component, allowing for easy upgrades.

### BAHA SURGERY

#### How long does surgery take?

The surgery takes no more than two hours under general anesthesia. The recipient will usually be discharged from hospital the same day, or the day after. Most people return to normal activities within a few days to a week. The surgery is routine in nature and most people experience only minimal discomfort. Your surgeon can tell you more about the process when you meet with them.

#### What happens during surgery?

It is better to discuss this with your surgeon.

#### What should I expect after surgery?

The external part of the Baha, the sound processor, will be fitted around 2 to 3 months after surgery. Time must be taken for the abutment to settle and heal. The patient should be well informed, have the right expectations and be motivated before getting the Baha

Baha system. How well you hear may depend on many factors.

### **What are the risks of surgery?**

There is a risk with all surgical procedures. It is important to discuss this with your surgeon. Some risks will be those applicable to any surgery performed under general anesthesia while others will be specific to the Baha process and the recipient's individual medical history.

### **COST OF A COCHLEAR BAHA**

#### **How much does a Baha cost? Will my health insurance pay for it?**

Costs include the cost of the implant system; surgical costs, pre and post implant assessment and support. In Australia, individuals with private health cover at an appropriate level, are fully covered for the device cost. For non-private patients, it is best to discuss the options with your surgeon.

### **NEXT STEPS - BAHA**

#### **Where do I go to talk to someone about getting a Cochlear Baha?**

- Step One:** Make an appointment to discuss BAHA with our BAHA Surgeon, Dr Nirmal Patel
- Step Two:** Undergo a medical evaluation
- Step Three:** See a Baha audiologist at Northside Audiology for a trial Baha. Call 9419 6999.
- Step Four:** Schedule your surgery date
- Step Five:** Switch on your Baha (2 to 3 months after surgery)