

Cochlear Implant Use During the COVID-19 Crisis

Tips to Consistently Use your CI during Stressful Times

The post is dedicated, with love and understanding, to the cochlear implant recipients who may be taking a break from their CIs during the difficult coronavirus timeframe.

- Maintain a routine. During a timeframe of uncertainty, concern, and worry—such as that we are all going through right now—it is very important to maintain our routines. Cook healthful foods, exercise, dress up, and even wear shoes. Your CIs and hearing are part of your routine.
- Stay connected! Stay involved! Every sound has its meaning. Stay oriented with what's going on around you.
- Be independent and strong. Feeling in control is always important, especially now.
- Do not indulge in silence. Despite the ease of falling into a routine of isolation and silence, force yourself to interact in normal ways. It can be difficult later to return to your good auditory functions and to effectively cope with a flood of auditory stimuli.
- Consider the effect of not using your cochlear implant to access sound on your family members. They have become accustomed to a certain level of communication with you. If you turn off, they now need to adjust to the fact that for several hours a day (or more) you may be disconnected. At a time like this, there is tremendous value in good communication, engagement, and partnership. Your attentiveness and communication are significant not only for you, but also for the people who live with you.
- Research on recipient utilization has demonstrated a correlation between the number of hours a day that adult CI recipients use their

CI and their speech-perception abilities. It was found that during the first year of CI use, adults with good speech perception skills used their CIs for an average of 3 hours a day more than people with poor speech perception.

Stay home, stay connected, enjoy your hearing, and be safe!
Naama

For further reading on this topic, please see: Schvartz-Leyzac KC, Conrad CA, Zwolan TA (2019). Datalogging statistics and speech recognition during the first year of use in adult cochlear implant recipients. *Otology & Neurotology*; 40 (7), 686-693.