



Written by **Dr. John Lasak | Wichita Ear Clinic**

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN HEARING AIDS NO LONGER HELP?

HEARING LOSS IMPACT

Hearing loss can make communicating with family and friends difficult, especially when it progresses. Some people will compensate by looking at lips, facial expressions, and strategically placing themselves in the room. However, as the hearing worsens, hearing aids are necessary to stay engaged and keep up with conversation. When a person's hearing loss becomes too great for traditional hearing aids, they realize they cannot socialize with their family and friends as they did in the past. This decreased socialization, and at times isolation, is not healthy for the mind, and significantly decreases quality of life.

The Anatomy of Hearing Loss

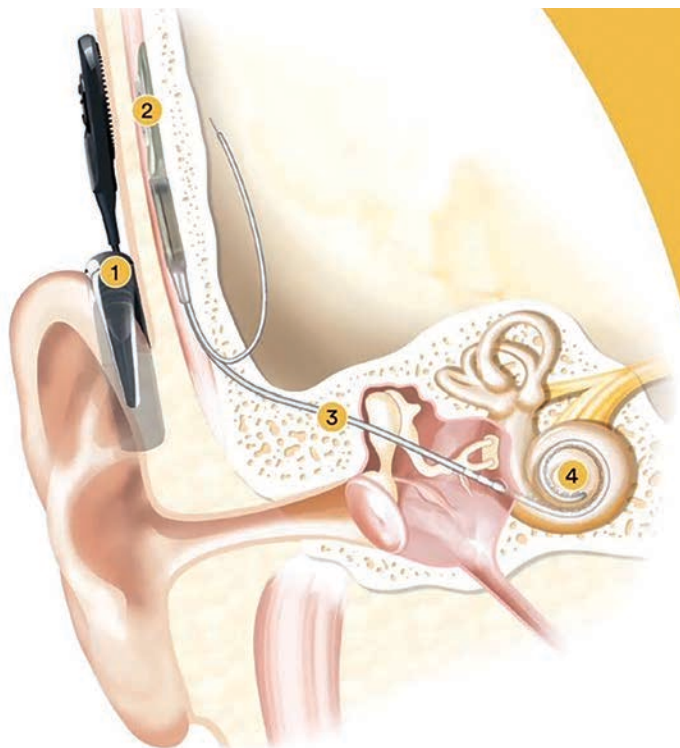
Hearing loss can occur anywhere within the auditory circuit, including the ear canal, eardrum, hearing bones, cochlea (the hearing organ), and the hearing nerve. Hearing loss due to the eardrum or hearing bones is frequently repaired with surgery. However, most hearing loss is sensorineural and caused by loss of cochlear hair cells. Hair cell loss cannot be treated with medication or surgery. Hearing aids are therefore required; however when the loss becomes too severe, they are no longer effective.

The Solution

When speech understanding is compromised, and hearing aids no longer adequately help, we need to directly stimulate the hearing nerve and bypass the damaged cochlear hair cells. This is what a cochlear implant does. It directly stimulates the hearing nerve so the sound information can be transmitted to the brain and interpreted as speech. Cochlear implants are approved for adults and children, and are done in an outpatient setting. Patient satisfaction is typically high, and one or both ears may be implanted.

Why Wichita Ear Clinic?

At the Wichita Ear Clinic we have completed over 700 cochlear implants. All hearing testing to determine cochlear implant candidacy is done on site at the Wichita Ear Clinic, as is all postoperative implant programming and speech therapy and rehabilitation. You and your family will be counseled regarding the candidacy process, surgery, implant programming, and expectations by our cochlear implant team. We will be your source for any cochlear implant needs for life. To see if you or a loved one is an implant candidate, please make an appointment with our team.



How it works: The processor(1) digitalizes the sound and sends it to the implant(2). The electrode (3) then enters the cochlea and stimulates the nerve (4) which sends the signal to the brain where it is interpreted as speech.



Cochlear implant

Wichita Ear Clinic

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