

NOW HEAR THIS

A Major Advancement In Cochlear Implants

(NAPSA)—For the first time, a new cochlear implant system allows people who are profoundly deaf to hear in “high definition.”

What Is A Cochlear Implant?

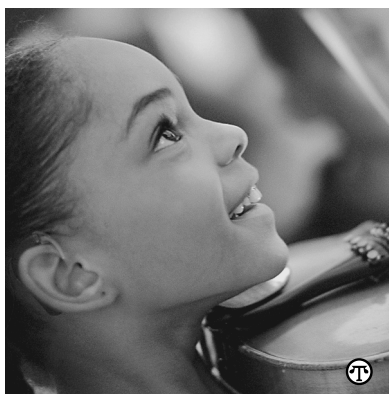
A cochlear implant is a small, complex, electronic device that can help to provide a sense of sound to a person who is profoundly deaf or severely hard of hearing. A new system, called Maestro, was developed by MED-EL. It consists of a component that sits behind the ear and is the smallest and lightest processor available today. It works with a second portion that is surgically placed under the skin.

How It Works

A cochlear implant is very different from a hearing aid. Hearing aids amplify sounds so they may be detected by people with hearing loss. Cochlear implants bypass damaged portions of the ear and directly stimulate the auditory nerve. Traditionally, implants have enabled many people to understand speech and other sounds in the environment, but sounds such as music, or speech in noisy environments, have presented challenges. For the first time, technology has advanced to the point where people who are profoundly deaf can actually listen to and appreciate the complex sound of music.

In a questionnaire of patients who participated in the clinical trial of the Maestro, 91 percent reported that, in general, music sounded pleasant with their cochlear implant.

According to Dr. Harold Pillsbury, University of North Carolina, “The technology of the new system is really dramatic. You get the best of both the internal chip that goes in with the actual



Play Mozart For Me—New hearing technology is designed to allow wearers to appreciate music and understand voices in noisy environments.

implanted device and the speech processor, which is curled over the ear. The two together have created a tremendous capacity for patients to hear; they can filter out certain noises, they can exist in environments that used to be not really well tolerated by people with cochlear implants.”

One Maestro user, Ann Cram, a teacher, had this to say: “The Maestro has helped me because I’m now able to return to my classroom and am able to hear the children again. I’m able to return to the job that I love.

“With my cochlear implant, I can hear everything. I’m able to talk on the telephone again, I’m able to listen to the radio, I’m able to communicate with family and friends, I can hear anything that a person with normal hearing can hear.”

The new cochlear implant system is designed to accommodate minimally invasive surgical techniques. To learn more, visit www.medel.com.