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Cochlear Implant Follow-Up & Rehabilitation

Cochlear implant surgery requires general anesthesia and lasts about 2 to 3 hours. Surgery is usually completed as an outpatient procedure, and may include a one-night stay in the hospital. It generally takes 3 to 5 weeks for the surgical incision to heal, but most children resume normal activities within days after the surgery.

Between 4 to 6 weeks after surgery, the child will return to the clinic to have the device activated for the first time. During the time between surgery and implant activation, the child will not be able to wear a hearing aid in the implanted ear and so will not be able to hear in that ear. If a hearing aid is worn in the non-implanted ear, the child should continue to wear this aid during the time between surgery and activation. Some children will continue to wear a hearing aid in their non-implanted ear to improve localization and listening in noise.

Device activation may be either a one or two-day process. Up to 20 return visits may be needed within the first year for both fine-tuning of the speech processor and auditory training or aural rehabilitation.

Cost Of A Cochlear Implant

The combined costs for pre-implant evaluations, the implant device, surgery and post-surgical fittings may be anywhere from $40,000 to $100,000 depending on an individual's needs and the center at which the surgery is performed.

It is important to keep in mind that the cochlear implant center will help in obtaining insurance approval for the cost of the surgery and follow-up appointments. Typically, hospitals receive approval from insurance companies before the surgery is scheduled.

At first the cost may seem overwhelming, but most private and group medical insurance policies do cover the cost of the device and surgery.