



June 2020

Renew your membership to our local chapter for only \$15 a year! 3 ways to renew: send your renewal with your name, address, phone number, and e-mail to: East Bay Chapter, HLAA, P.O. Box 12484, Oakland, CA 94604-12484. See back page to

sign up and support National HLAA.

June 13, 2020 Meeting by Zoom! Zoom in and see your friends from HLAA-EBC. Our speaker will be Steve Derby, Lawyer. Steve Derby is a civil trial lawyer who has been trying cases in state and federal court for 28 years. He has been representing persons with disabilities since 1996. Since that time, Mr. Derby has successfully merged the laws related to personal injury and disability access to maximize recovery for his clients with disabilities and to remediate the barriers they encountered for the good of the disability community. Mr. Derby is the father of two children with progressive hearing loss and his mother (now deceased) had both hearing loss and mobility impairment due to partial paralysis of her left leg. Mr. Derby is a frequent author, speaker and instructor on topics related to trial practice and disability rights.

Our June 13 meeting will be a Zoom meeting:

Everyone needs to register up front at our website: <http://www.hearinglosseb.org/>

After you register, you'll be sent information about how to join the meeting.

HLAA-EB will post to the California State Association webpage and our website.

Check out our website: <http://www.hearinglosseb.org/> Contact us: info@hearinglosseb.org

THE VIRTUAL WALK4HEARING WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

Were you there? Despite being virtual instead of being able to walk along the Bay in Alameda, the Walk4Hearing on May 30 came off without a hitch. Approximately 82 people participated from various parts of California and the country. MC'd by Ronnie Adler, National Walk4Hearing Manager, with speeches by Barbara Kelley, Executive Director of HLAA, a comic bit from Gael Hannan, Comedian and a HLAA Member, and a nod to Joss Kendrick, American Girl's 2020 doll of the year. The Joss Kendrick doll is a surfer and wears a hearing aid! American Girl teamed up with Caroline Marks, a 17-year-old surfing prodigy and member of the first U.S.



Women's Olympic surfing team in the creation of Joss. Children could enter a contest to win the doll. At the Bay Area Walk4Hearing, a girl named Avery of Team Avery out of Lodi, California, won the doll! She was so excited!

After the formalities, various members from all over the nation (mostly from the Bay Area) spoke about what HLAA means to them. Many said they had learned so much about hearing loss from the meetings and were grateful for the support of others with hearing loss. George Fitzgerald said, "Susan and I thought the Zoom event went very well. After it was over we went down to Crown Beach to walk the WALK4HEARING course. We did not see any W4H shirts, but we dropped out at the half-way mark. It was beautiful, but we may have to get in a little better shape!" Ha, ha - next year George!

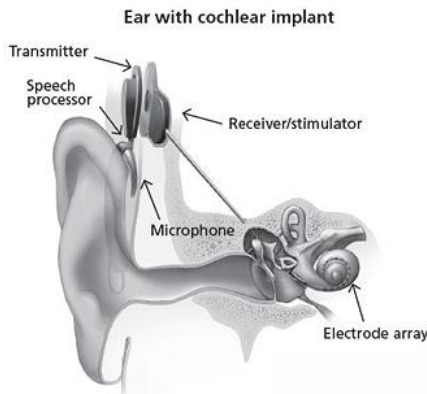
MEETING NOTES: *How Do I Know If A Cochlear Implant Is Right for Me?*

At our May. 9, 2020 meeting, our guest speaker Dr. Jan Larky, Au.D., a licensed Audiologist at the Audiology and Hearing Devices Clinic, Stanford Health Care in Palo Alto, CA, gave a detailed presentation about cochlear implants (CI's), while also addressing questions that those with hearing loss (HL) often raise. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Speech and Hearing Sciences from UCSB, went on to the University of Iowa gaining a Master of Arts degree in Audiology in 1989, and then proceeded on to AT Still University where she was awarded her professional doctorate in Audiology (Au.D.).



Thereafter, Dr. Larky joined the House Ear Institute, at which time she was introduced to what has become her specialty in cochlear implants (CI's). Since then, she has acquired three decades of experience and expertise in developing her CI specialty while working at UC San Francisco, the Pediatric Audiology Dept. at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, and the Adult Audiology Clinic at the Stanford Ear Institute, where she currently provides the full range of services to CI candidates and recipients.

Components of a Cochlear Implant: There are 2 major components to a CI, the external part & the internal implant.



➤ The external audio processor worn behind the individual's ear has a transmitting coil that sends out coded electrical signals to the receiver & stimulator implanted under the skin.

➤ The Internal implant is an electrode array threaded into the cochlea that picks up the coded impulses, using them to stimulate the cochlea's nerve fibers. The cochlear nerve transmits the signals to the brain, where they are then interpreted & heard as sound by the individual.

What Candidates Want to Know: CI expectations & outcomes are discussed during the initial 2-hr. candidacy evaluation.

- ✓ Medical Qs: Am I too old for CI's? There are no age limits for CI's, as long as the candidate is in good health.
- ✓ Surgical Qs: What is the CI surgery like? Are there any side effects? It's an outpatient procedure at the CI clinic where patients should plan to stay the whole day. After being put to sleep with anesthesia & waking up a few hours later, the patient may be a little woozy & experience a metallic sense of taste initially, but typically feels fine in a couple of days. Although each patient is counseled to possibly expect some hearing loss, every effort is made to preserve the patient's hearing post CI surgery.
- ✓ Choosing A Device: There are 3 major CI brands. The CI Clinic reviews the different features of each brand, answers the patient's questions & refers the patient to manufacturers for additional information. It is left to the patient, in consultation with his/her doctor, to decide on the CI device.
- ✓ Device Reliability: The external part may be lost or damaged so it's important to check on a warranty & spare parts for the CI's. Over time, the internal implant may break, but it can usually be re-done or re-implanted.

Device Cosmetics: The CI patient can choose from among the different sizes, colors, and weights of devices, but the more important question is which device will he or she be able to manage best on a daily basis. There are generally no physical restrictions on the CI recipient's activities, including biking,

wrestling, sky diving, or even scuba diving if not going too deep. Although CI patients will normally hear sound better than they would without CI's, no guarantee can be made of how much better they will hear.

Technology Compatibility: CI's are typically compatible with common types of technology, such as smartphones, Bluetooth streaming, phone controls, and various types of accessories. Future upgrades will be available. Dependent on the proprietary co., CI battery life may vary. There are re-chargeable batteries available for CI's, but CI's also work with disposal batteries.

Considerations for CI Candidates: Those with HL must consider several issues before deciding on whether they wish to seek out CI's:

- "Getting by" may not be enough when there may exist options for experiencing better hearing.
- Listening fatigue & exhaustion can set in as those with HL often must make extra efforts to hear.
- Frustration with self, family & friends can occur when communication becomes too difficult.
- Social withdrawal, isolation, & depression can be the result of unidentified or untreated HL.
- Commitment is required of CI users to both the initial CI process & follow-up to optimize success.

Barriers & Solutions to Getting CIs: Individuals interested in getting CI's often run into barriers.

- Perceived satisfaction with HA's – A 2018 study found that 82% of CI recipients heard better with CI's as compared to their prior HA's.
- Costs & insurance coverage – Medicare, Medicaid, Veteran's Affairs, and/or private insurance may cover most costs of CI's so that qualified recipients often pay minimal out-of-pocket costs.
- Fear of surgery – Surgical procedures & health concerns are addressed during the candidate's evaluation.
- Unknown outcomes – Hearing goals & realistic expectations of outcomes are fully discussed with CI candidates during the evaluation.
- Lack of awareness of expanded criteria for CI candidacy – More persons may now qualify for CI candidacy.

Why Get Cochlear Implants: There exist a number of identifiable benefits to getting CI's.

- + Better hearing for CI recipients, even for HA users, is well-documented by 30-40 years of data on CI's.
- + Communication with other people can become easier & less tiring as speech understanding improves.
- + Hearing loss is a health concern like blood pressure & cholesterol that should be screened & treated.
- + Social interaction with individuals & groups may become less difficult & more likely with CI's.
- + The possibility of cognitive decline may be reduced with improved hearing & speech understanding.

Expanding Candidacy for Cochlear Implants: Recently, CI candidacy criteria have been expanded to include not only those individuals in the severe-profound sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL) range, but also those individuals in the broader moderate–profound bilateral SNHL range, as well as persons experiencing singlesidedness HL. Another option may be a bimodal hearing solution with a HA used for 1 ear while a CI is used for the other ear.

Possible Outcomes: No guarantees of hearing preservation or successful implantation in individual cases can be made. Nevertheless, research studies over decades have generally found that CI recipients experience improvement in overall sound quality and speech clarity, while demonstrating

increased hearing scores on word and sentence tests, including hearing in noisy environments and understanding of words with certain consonants.

For More Information:

- ❖ American Cochlear Implant Alliance – Mission: Advance access to the gift of hearing by CI's through research, advocacy & awareness. See www.acialliance.org to find a cochlear implant clinic.
- ❖ Please contact the Stanford Clinic New Patient Coordinator Rebecca at (650) 736-9882 & say you heard Dr. Larky talk about CI's & would like to set up an appointment with her.

~ Kathy Fairbanks

On the lighter side...



HEARING AID BATTERIES! Only 17 cents apiece at Costco.

HLAA members can join the hearOclub to have batteries delivered to your home! Use the coupon code **HLAAmember** online at hearclub.com or by calling 833.LISTEN-2 (833.547.8362).

DONATE USED HEARING AIDS and/or HEARING EQUIPMENT! See Dale Davis at a meeting or ddavis94605@gmail.com.

East Bay Leadership Team

The chapter is run by a Steering Committee, Leader Dale Davis, ddavis94605@gmail.com who also oversees the Membership Database.

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