

OUR MISSION:

To advance access to the gift of hearing provided by cochlear implantation through research, advocacy and awareness.



IMPORTANT HEALTH ALERT FOR COCHLEAR IMPLANT RECIPIENTS

Dear Cochlear Implant Clinician:

The Centers for Disease Control has recently revised the recommendation for pneumococcal meningitis vaccination for adult cochlear implant recipients. These recommendations were revised after recent studies on vaccine effectiveness in immunocompetent patients indicated that a change to the vaccine regimen may prove to be even more effective in preventing meningitis in these groups.

Previously, the recommendation for adult CI users involved receiving the 23-valent pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (Pneumovax 23, PPSV23). **The CDC has revised the recommendation for adults to include the 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine that is typically given to children (Pneumovax 13, PCV13) in addition to the 23-valent vaccine.**

This means that new cochlear implant patients should receive both vaccines going forward, and existing cochlear implant users who have already received the Pneumovax vaccine or boosters should now add the Pnevnar or equivalent vaccine to their regimen. The complete recommendation, along with a table to identify the correct timing for vaccine administration, can be found in full at:

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6140a4.htm?s_cid=mm6140a4_w.

Please note that the meningococcal vaccine that is often given to teens and college students does not confer any protection against pneumococcal disease; please help to ensure that your patients do not accidentally receive the wrong vaccine and erroneously assume they are covered.

The American Cochlear Implant (ACI) Alliance, Advanced Bionics (AB), Cochlear Americas, and MED-EL fully support the recommendations of the CDC and FDA, and ask that you make the patients you work with aware of these recent changes. Pneumococcal infections are potentially devastating and vaccines to prevent these infections are critically important to all cochlear implant users. The above recommendations should be given top priority for cochlear implant users and their families. We encourage recipients to talk with their primary care doctor about completing the full vaccine series to reduce the risk of pneumococcal meningitis.

Sincerely,

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