

# Bone Anchored Hearing Aid

## The Operation, Aftercare and Support

Head & Neck  
ENT Department

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

# Introduction

This leaflet supports the information already provided by your audiologist: Bone Conduction & Bone Anchored Hearing Aids (BAHA) – The Process of Assessment. It provides information about the day of your surgery, and aims to help you understand as much as possible about the procedure and aftercare. It will also explain the benefits, risks and any alternatives.

Your ENT Consultant has suggested that your hearing may benefit from a Bone Anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA). You will have already met the Audiologists at West Park Hospital and you have been assessed for the suitability of Bone Anchored Hearing Aid. You will have met with your surgeon and their team in the outpatient's clinic, where the most suitable type of hearing aid will have been agreed upon. This leaflet has been written to explain to you what to expect during your surgery.

## Consent

We must seek your consent for any procedure or treatment beforehand. Your doctor will explain the risks, benefits, and alternatives where relevant before they ask for your consent. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to ask for more information. The choice about which treatment is best for you will be made together with your surgeon and the Audiologists. This will be based on the risks and benefits of the treatments and your individual circumstances; you will be involved in these discussions throughout the entire process.

## What benefits can I expect from the operation?

You will have discussed the outcome of the specialist hearing tests and assessments completed by the Audiologists at West Park Hospital and it has been decided that Bone Anchored Hearing Aid will benefit your hearing.

You can expect:

- Improved hearing, resulting in a better quality of life
- Reduced risk of ear problems such as infection, discharge and irritation associated with the use of ear moulds for behind the ear hearing aids

- Improved comfort for patients with skin conditions and middle ear disease compared to behind the ear hearing aids.

## What are the risks of the procedure?

It is usually a straightforward procedure however complications can occasionally arise. The risks associated with the BAHA procedure are as follows:

- Pain
- Infection
- Numbness
- The abutment (implant) coming loose
- Skin growing back over the implant
- Cerebrospinal fluid (fluid from around the brain) leak; rare.

All of these risks may occur and would be managed by your surgeon, ENT nurse or Audiologist.

## What are the treatment options or alternatives?

There are 2 types of Bone Anchored Hearing Aid:

1. Visible above the skin: using a metal abutment onto which the hearing processor is attached
2. Hidden beneath the skin: onto which the hearing processor is attached magnetically

The most suitable device for your needs will have been selected by your surgeon.

## How should I prepare for this operation?

You will have already discussed the options of having a local anaesthetic or a general anaesthetic. Your surgeon will have reviewed the specialist hearing tests and you will have been informed which side of your head is best for the implant to achieve the best possible results; you will have signed a consent form once you are happy with the planned procedure. You will need to nominate a carer, who will assist with daily care of the BAHA and they will need to support you for as long as you have the BAHA.

You will be required to complete a pre-operative health questionnaire which is accessed online, if you experience any difficulties with this, you will have been given a contact number for assistance. You may also have to attend the hospital for a face-to-face pre-operative assessment. This will take place within a month of your operation date to check that you are healthy enough to undergo surgery.

You may also be required to have blood tests and electronic tracing of your heart. Your blood pressure, pulse, weight and height will be recorded and swabs from your nostrils, armpit and groin will be taken to check that you have no current infections.

## The day of your operation

If you have undergone satisfactory pre-operative checks, you will be given a date to attend hospital for your procedure and you will usually only need to be in hospital for the day. If you are to have surgery under general anaesthetic, you will have been given instructions when to stop eating and drinking before admission to the hospital. The anaesthetist who will be giving you the anaesthetic will come to see and examine you before your operation. You will be asleep for the entire operation.

You will be admitted by a member of the nursing team who will ask you some questions and take your observations. You will be given some water to sip until you are collected for theatre.

You may be on a morning, afternoon or all day list. The nursing team will advise you when you need to get changed into a theatre gown.

You will be required to bring with you a small bag with slippers, dressing gown and regular medication and any other necessities you require with you during your stay. However, we do ask you to bring in the minimal amount of personal property.

There is no visiting on the day case units. Your nominated overnight carer and transport home, will be contacted when you are ready to be collected from the hospital.

## What will happen during surgery?

If you have decided to undergo the procedure under local anaesthetic, you will be awake throughout the procedure. Your surgeon and the theatre nurse will be there to reassure you. You will be lying on your side and, to minimise the risk of infection, you will have a sterile towel placed over the side of your head, but you will be able to speak to the staff around you easily, there may be some music playing.

The operation is a minor procedure and is carried out during one visit to the operating theatre. A small area of hair may be shaved at the intended site of insertion and a small incision made to accommodate the implant which is then screwed directly into the skull bone. The incision is then stitched closed with dissolvable stitches. You will have a dressing applied in theatre, immediately after the surgery is completed.

Whether you are asleep or awake, the operation usually takes about half an hour; waking up after an anaesthetic means that you will stay in the recovery area of theatre for a little longer.

## What will happen after the operation?

You will be closely monitored in the recovery area of theatre; your wound dressing will be checked by theatre staff to ensure it is secure. You will return to the ward, where you will be monitored by staff; you will be given pain relief if required and your wound dressing will be checked prior to being discharged from the hospital. A member of the surgical team will usually visit you before you go home. It is advisable that you arrange a lift home from hospital.

## Discharge home

You are advised to eat and drink normally as soon as possible to aid the natural healing process. It is best to drink water, this can be flavoured if preferred. You must follow the instructions given to you by ward staff regarding your dressing as there are different types of dressing that can be applied in theatre.

Important care:

- The wound site must be kept dry. Shower or bath carefully totally avoiding the dressing and implant area
- Do not wash, perm or colour your hair until instructed by the BAHA nursing staff
- Do not go swimming.

You will receive an appointment to attend the ENT outpatient's department at around 1 week following your surgery, on this day you will see one of the BAHA nursing team who will check the implant and the operation site. You will continue to see the nursing team, if necessary, until the implant site is progressing well with healing.

If you have been fitted with a visible implant, you will also be given an information leaflet and a case containing all the necessary equipment for future care of the implant site. Your nominated carer will be shown how to care for the area around the implant once it is fully healed.

By 6 weeks after surgery, the bone around the implant is usually strong and healed. The BAHA nursing team will inform the Audiologists at West Park Hospital and your first processor fitting appointment will be arranged, this may be delayed a little if the site is slow to heal.

## Contacts and useful numbers

If at any time you have concerns about your wound, or in future about the implant site, we encourage you to contact either the ENT ward or ENT outpatients.

You have access to advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via the ENT department now that you have a BAHA implant.

### **Head & Neck Outpatients Department:**

Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

ENT: Tel: 01902 307999 Ext: 81632 or Ext: 85046

### **Head & Neck Ward**

Evenings, weekends and Bank Holidays

Tel: 01902 307999 Ext: 4043, Ext: 5043

Always contact the department first, do not attend without prior arrangement.

## English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

## Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

## Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

## Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

## Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。