

Abstract EFAS/DGA 2007

How can you hear? Results from an Everyday Listening Questionnaire

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The hearing abilities for Cochlear Implant (CI) users have continuously improved during the last years. Today many CI users hope for a new natural hearing, music appreciation, the possibility of telephone use and understanding in noisy backgrounds.

Routine speech perception tests show an understanding in clinical situations, which is not always comparable with an understanding in real life. To help the clinic assess how well CI recipients cope with the challenges of everyday life, and to help identify weaknesses that may be addressed with technical accessories, the Everyday Listening questionnaires was developed together with Advanced Bionics.

The first questionnaire was answered by 37 adult subjects implanted with the HiRes90K or CII implant system of Advanced Bionics and more then six months of CI hearing experience. They had a mean age of 50 years and a mean duration of deafness of 3.7 years.

The results showed a good speech understanding possibility in quiet surroundings and difficulties as soon as background noises emerged. It was seen that use of the T-Mic compensated for the need of other accessories for those with a behind the ear processor (BTE). An FM system was especially used in situations such as business meetings. Users of a body worn processor often benefited from an induction system on telephone and reached subjectively better speech understanding with it.

The knowlege acquired from the first Everyday Listening questionnaire was used for an updated version of the questionnaire. The new one considers all implants of Advanced Bionics. It also probes deeper into the reasons why certain technical accessories are not used. Results of more than 20 participants will be presented at the conference

