



Tips and Hints!

Faye Yarroll received her first cochlear implant in 2005 and her second in 2007. Today, she's an active member of the Cochlear Awareness Network in Australia, and shares her tips for using the phone with bilateral cochlear implants.

Tips and Hints for using the Telephone

What accessories do you use with landline and mobile phones?

I have a few landline phones at home, all designed for hearing impaired people. For me, each one has to have good volume control, speaker phone functionality and telecoil compatibility. I looked for the same things in my new Nokia mobile phone. I've also used the Nokia and Artone Loopsets, which both work well.

At work, I use a Plantronics supra binaural headset and amplifier with my Freedom™ speech processor.

I think it's a fantastic set-up, but there are a few tricks to using headsets:

1. I find a 'binaural headset' (two earpieces) helps balance your hearing.
2. I recommend getting 'leatherette donut-type ear cushions' for your headset. The full foam ear cushions seem to muffle the sound more.
3. Positioning your headset is very important. I prefer to position the ear cushions towards the top of my ear, so they're close to my speech processor's microphone. You might even attach a small spacer to the headband, to get it to sit a little higher.

How do you use these accessories to enhance your phone use?

At work, I can't live without my Plantronics headset and amplifier. They're a great combination with my desk phone.

Otherwise, I always try to use the speaker phone on both my landline and my mobile when convenient. I find it much easier to hear using the speaker function.

What advice would you offer to other implant recipients?

Using a telephone can be daunting, even stressful, so practice whenever you can. Position the handset or mobile at the top of your processor, near the microphone, to optimise the volume. Then get the right telephone and accessories, and practise by calling friends until you're really

comfortable. It does take some getting used to. You just have to give yourself a chance.... Practice makes perfect!

Do you have any other useful comments?

My best tip would be to get the right telecoil function added to your favourite programs. As a bilateral cochlear implant user, I can have the best of both worlds. I use the T switch on my right processor to block out background noise, so I can focus on the telephone listening situation. And I use MT (Mixed "M"icrophone and "T"elecoil) on my left processor, so that I can still pick up background noise through the processor's microphone. It means I can hear myself when I talk on the phone, and hear if anyone in the room tries to talk to me at the same time.

Some people don't know they can choose T or MT functionality, so ask your audiologist what has been set up for you.

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