

Technology Feature – Airport Security

Faye Yarroll is a Bilateral Freedom Cochlear Implant Recipient (1st 2005, 2nd 2007). Faye shares her tips and hints with other recipients through her active membership of Cicada as well as being a member of the Cochlear Awareness Network (CAN).



Faye has travelled with Bilateral Cochlear Implants to several countries and normally has no trouble at all whilst going through the Airport Check-In. However Faye did experience delays in Dalian - China and Hong Kong. Note that in China, it was a remote airport and not a major city and therefore staff did not read or speak English well.



Faye always carries her small Cochlear Identification Card, but it was not much use when the airport security staff could not read or understand English. I had to go through a 15 minute double and triple check, have the metal detector scan swiped over my body, and ended up with a frisk search before I was allowed through security. Eventually I was allowed to continue on my way and it was just a minor inconvenience. Knowing this, if I was to go to remote China again, I would ask Cochlear for an Identification written in Chinese next time. Don't let me put you off, I have travelled extensively, and most countries are fully aware of what a Cochlear Implant is and you normally pass through security with no trouble at all. Just be aware.

Things to remember when travelling:

- The Cochlear Implant may activate the security system at the airport. For you, there is no trouble going through the metal detector – but you may hear a buzz as you pass through. This will not damage your processor or the implant.
- If required show the airport staff your Cochlear Implant Identification Card.
- Consider obtaining a letter from your audiologist to justify the supply of batteries if you need to carry a lot with you.
- Turn the processor off while the plane is taking off and landing and tell the aircrew that you have a cochlear implant and that you may not hear the advice given over the loudspeakers in the plane during take-off and landing. Once the plane is UP HIGH and going straight (not climbing anymore) then you can turn on your CI again until it is time to descend for landing.
- If you have a Cochlear Personal Audio Cable accessory, then take it with you so you can plug into the planes In-Flight Entertainment system and enjoy a movie or music as you travel.
- Carry spares and provisions like a spare processor, or a spare coil/cable, microphone covers etc with you in case of emergency.
- Remember to take a small air tight container with a Dry-Brik or a Metal Can Desiccant so you can put your processor in overnight. Especially if travelling in countries with high humidity.
- Consider insurance for your processor as it might get accidentally lost, stolen or damaged during your trip.
- Before you leave, ask your audiologist for contact addresses overseas or inter-state where you can obtain help regarding your implant in an emergency. It is also easy to access the Cochlear Website and obtain the information yourself before you travel.
- Finally, if you have a Shake-Awake Vibrating Alarm clock, then do not forget to pack it and take it with you. When travelling in other countries often you are in a different time zone, so consider getting yourself a portable vibrating alarm clock if you don't have one already ... they are great and I never leave home to travel without one. Have a safe trip.

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