



Cochlear™ Awareness Network

Rob's Story

Rob Dobson

Hears with bilateral cochlear implants

(Nucleus® Freedom™)

“I can now focus less on trying to hear and more on other activities, leaving me feeling more energized than before!”



Hear now. And always

Cochlear™



Meet Rob

Rob Dobson

Currently hearing with bilateral Nucleus Freedom cochlear implants

First Implant 19 June, 2007

Second Implant 11 November, 2008



I would like to share my journey through life being hearing impaired and now my new life as a recipient of Bilateral Freedom Cochlear Implants.

I received my first cochlear implant on my left side on 19 June, 2007 and on Wednesday 11 July 2007, my speech processor was activated.

I had great success and it was absolutely amazing to hear and listen to voices and environmental noise. The first thing I was able to do was to listen and not have to rely on lip reading! Post implant I scored 98-100% first time on speech recognition and discrimination tests. Prior to the assessment I only scored 0-1% with hearing aids on both ears. I found too that my greatest success with the cochlear implant was the ability to listen to every day sounds like the car radio, the television, people talking behind me and music.

By the next year, I was seriously considering getting my right ear implanted. This was an easy decision as my right ear has been profoundly deaf since birth. I was aware of the long rehabilitation ahead and looking forward to the challenges that awaited me.



I received my second implant on my right side on 11 November 2008 and on 1 December 2008 my speech processor was activated.

The switch on was a success and while I am learning to cope with new sounds in the right ear and an improved sense of direction of sound, it has still been a huge learning curve. What was more amazing was to be able to hear and listen to four to five words at a time and short sentences with 95% success.

The sounds at switch-on were quite robotic to be honest. A 'jingle bells' type theme with lots of high pitched squeals and whistles greeted me at first but I was expecting this and now I'm loving exploring more new sounds around the house and environment.

It has been said that no two cochlear implant switch-ons are alike - both are completely different and I must say that I agree fully with this statement.

My audiologist explained to me the pros and cons of bilateral implants prior to implantation. Hearing with two ears is referred to as 'binaural' hearing. Binaural hearing allows us to fully engage in the world by providing a better ability to determine which direction sound is coming from, and better performance when joining in on conversations in noisy situations.

The best things about getting the cochlear implant have been restored detection of everyday sounds in the hearing environment, improved face-to-face communication and the ability to understand speech through hearing alone. Before I had my implants, spending time with family and friends had been rewarding but exhausting. Now that I have bilateral implants, I focus less on trying to hear and more on other activities, leaving me feeling more energized than before!



For me, the main benefits of bilateral cochlear implants are :

- Better sound awareness and improved hearing performance
- The ability to tune in to important sounds and tune out interfering sounds
- Better hearing in background noise
- More natural, balanced sound quality
- Better ability to know where sound is coming from
- Improved speech understanding

I have been writing an online 'blog' about my bilateral cochlear implant journey. You can visit my blog at <http://rsdobson.blogspot.com/>

I am an active member of the Cochlear Awareness Network and Better Hearing Australia



Connect with the Cochlear Family

Want to connect with other people who hear with Cochlear Implants or Bone Conduction implants? Here's how:

1. Read more stories on www.cochlear.com
2. Visit the Cochlear Awareness Network website www.c-a-network.com
3. E-mail or call us to connect you with a Cochlear Awareness Network (CAN) volunteer who can share their personal story with you and give you an insight of what life with a Cochlear hearing solution is like.

E-mail: lballam-davies@cochlear.com

Ph: (02) 8002 2853

Or you can contact Cochlear Customer Service on 1800 620 929 or customerservice@cochlear.com

Be sure to tell us a little bit about yourself and your situation so we can match you with the most suitable CAN volunteer.