



**St. Elizabeth's Hospital
Marketing Department**

Belleville, IL 62220
618/234/2120 Ext. 1270
Fax: 618/222/4748

*From: Kelly Barbeau
Marketing Support Specialist*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: St. Elizabeth's Hospital is first in the metro-east to offer Baha implant surgery for hearing loss patients.
Belleville, IL

Belleville, IL - Area residents with conductive and mixed hearing loss can now improve their hearing and ability to communicate by having a Baha Implant surgery done at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, the first and only hospital in the metro-east to offer this procedure.

Made by Cochlear™, the Baha is a surgically implantable system for the treatment of hearing loss that works through direct bone conduction. It is used to help people with chronic ear infections, congenital external auditory canal atresia and single sided deafness who cannot benefit from conventional hearing aids.

The benefits of the Baha implant include improved overall improved hearing for the patient, though the degree of hearing improvement varies between individuals. It allows for improved accuracy in understanding speech in combination with speech reading, and helps differentiate environmental sounds such as background noise in a restaurant. Users of the Baha are also better able to monitor the volume and quality of their own voice.

“St. Elizabeth's is proud to be the first to offer the Baha implant to our community,” said Judy Patterson RN, MHA, CNOR, Director of Surgical Services at St. Elizabeth's. “ With this short surgical procedure, we can provide each patient the ability to communicate confidently with family, friends and others.”

The system, which has been in use since 1977, allows sound to be conducted through the bone rather than via the middle ear. It works by enhancing natural bone transmission as a pathway for sound to travel to the inner ear, bypassing the external auditory canal and middle ear. This unique hearing treatment is the only system of its kind cleared by the Food and Drug Administration(FDA) to treat hearing loss.

Dr. Carl Lee II, of the ENT Institute of Southern Illinois is the surgeon currently performing the Baha procedure. He received his doctorate from Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, Ohio, where he also completed his general surgery training. Dr. Lee completed otologic surgical training at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Bermingham, England. Dr. Lee provides medical and surgical treatment for problems associated with general ENT, head and neck, ear, thyroid disorders, sinus surgery, skin cancers, sleep apnea, and allergy.

Other links:

cochlearamericas.com

steliz.org

St. Elizabeth's Hospital, in Belleville, IL, a 506-bed acute care medical facility, is accredited by the Society of Chest Pain Center and maintains a Gold Seal of approval from the Joint Commission. The hospital was founded by the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis. Today, we continue the mission of our founding sisters: to provide care for the sick and needy with a spirit of respect, care, competence and joy. For more information please contact Kelly Barbeau at 618.234.2120, extension 1270.

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