Dear potential cochlear implant patient, parent, or guardian,

Our cochlear implant candidates must complete at least part of the immunization requirements before surgery can be scheduled. Compliance with the full immunization schedule must be documented as soon as possible. Please bring proof of the following immunizations to your initial visit with the audiologist and cochlear implant surgeon. Failure to do so may delay the scheduling of your cochlear implant surgery.

The Listening Center team at Johns Hopkins wants to provide you with information about pneumococcal vaccination and how to best reduce the risk of meningitis. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has new vaccine requirements (October 2012) for pneumococcal vaccination in cochlear implant patients:

- Young Children (younger than 2y) – A full schedule of Prevnar 13 vaccines should be administered as routinely required in the U.S.

- Young Children (older than 2y) – One dose of PPV23 or Pneumovax should be given at age 2y at least 8 weeks after the last dose of Prevnar 13.

- Adults (age 19y to 64) who have NOT had any prior pneumococcal vaccinations now need one dose of Prevnar 13 followed 8 weeks later by PPV23 or Pneumovax. A Pneumovax booster is required at age 65y.

- Adults (age 19y to 64) who have had prior vaccination only with Pneumovax, now also need one dose of Prevnar 13 to be given 1 year or more after their Pneumovax shot. A Pneumovax booster is required at age 65y.

- Adults over age 65 need one dose of Prevnar 13 to be given at least 1 year after Pneumovax. If no pneumococcal vaccines given yet, get Prevnar 13 then Pneumovax 8 weeks later.

Pneumococcal vaccination protects against Streptococcus pneumoniae (commonly referred to as pneumococcus), the bacterium most commonly responsible for meningitis after cochlear implant surgery. Although extremely rare, meningitis has been reported worldwide in 200 patients with cochlear implants, and has unfortunately led to 28 deaths. We therefore take this matter very seriously. To minimize the risk of infection, we require all cochlear implant patients to receive age-appropriate pneumococcal vaccination and to provide us with proof of vaccination. We are taking these precautions in accordance with guidelines established by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Center for Disease Control (CDC), and state health departments.

The Listening Center asks that you bring proof of vaccinations to your first visit or send via fax at (410)-367-2365 (Attention: Barbara Gottschalk or Rachel Hisim) as soon as possible so that the surgery scheduling may proceed.

If you have not yet had surgery, your surgeon may refuse to operate if you or your children are not properly vaccinated.

For more information and as a reference for your primary care physician or pediatrician, please visit the following CDC website, which can also be accessed by the link below:
http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6434a4.htm
Thank you for assisting us. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,
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(410) 367-2365 Fax

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Name of Patient              Date of Birth

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Signature of Health Care Provider  Vaccines Given with Dates