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Imaging in cochlear implants

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Preoperative Computed Tomography (CT), scan evaluation of the temporal bones and MRI brain in cochlear implant candidates play a crucial role in determining candidacy and side of implantation. The CT scans allow the surgeon to carefully review the anatomy of the inner ear and mastoid cavity in order to predict any potential difficulties or complications that may be encountered during implant insertion. We retrospectively reviewed 200 preoperative CT scans, of the temporal bones in children who have been successfully implanted and also those difficulties faced during surgery. In these scans, we assessed the degree of mastoid pneumatization, cochlear anatomy, and patency, size of vestibular aqueduct, cochlear aqueduct and internal auditory canal, jugular bulb, 7th/8th nerve thickness. Findings were analysed and difficulty encountered in insertion of the implant and electrodes in each case, CSF leak, facial nerve trauma were compared with imaging findings. We believe, it is important to recognize the key features in the imaging of temporal bone for planning in preoperative evaluation of cochlear implant candidates.

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