



Brennan Dodson, MD

## NEW OUTPATIENT PROCEDURES AT BOZEMAN DEACONESS

*Implanting the Seeds of Sound: Baha Implant by Dr. Brennan Dodson first of its kind in Bozeman*

SUE KOSLOFSKY IS LIKE A KID IN A CANDY STORE. Rather

than thirsting after sweets, she is hungrily listening wide-eyed to every single sound that resonates around her, like the scratch of a pen on paper or snow crunching under her boots.

For many people, these noises are nothing noteworthy. But for Koslofsky, they are earth-shaking and ear-shaking, because for nearly all her 66 years, she had been unable to hear much of anything in her right ear, despite several surgeries and hearing aids.

Now, thanks to a Baha Implant surgically embedded at Bozeman Deaconess Hospital, Koslofsky can hear clearly. Her surgery by Brennan Dodson, MD, of Bridger Ear, Nose and Throat was the first of its kind in Bozeman.

Baha, or bone-anchored hearing aid, is a titanium implant imbedded in the bone behind the ear. A sound processor snaps on an abutment attached to the implant, allowing sounds to vibrate in the skull bone and be conducted directly into the inner ear rather than through the air, bypassing a damaged ear canal, ear bones or eardrum.

Baha implants can be used for young children suffering from congenital ear bone problems, narrowed or no

ear canals and adults who have had multiple ear surgeries or scarring behind the eardrum. Among adults, Baha implants work well for hearing aids users allergic to plastic, or have narrow ear canals or chronic ear problems. Those with sudden onset of deafness in one ear, where an infection leaves one ear non-functional, are prime candidates.

"The Baha routes the sound from the bad ear to the good ear, so the patient can more easily hear someone on their bad side," Dodson said.

Implants require three months to integrate into the bone, so Koslofsky had surgery at Bozeman Deaconess last October, and her Baha was activated in January. "The thing that blows my mind is that the sound is so natural," she said. "I expected to hear my own voice, and distortion, but sounds are sharp, distinct and clear."

While she is adjusting to the 3 millimeter stub when brushing her hair or sleeping on her right side, Koslofsky calls her new hearing sense "life-changing" and "a real miracle." And since the Baha is blue-tooth compatible and can plug directly into an iPod or FM system, laughed Koslofsky, it may keep her dancing with joy.

"I expected to hear my own voice, and distortion, but sounds are sharp, distinct and clear. It's kind of perfect. Since it was turned on, I've had a smile on my face as big as the Montana sky. I feel such pure joy."



Bozeman resident Sue Koslofsky shows off her new Baha implant.

