

MED-EL Launches World's First Commercially Available Totally Invisible Cochlear Implant

Tuesday 29 September, 2026

- World's first and only commercially available cochlear implant with all components implanted beneath the skin
- Continuous hearing day and night
- Hearing performance designed to be the same as established cochlear implant solutions

September 29, 2026 – (Innsbruck, Austria): MED-EL, a global leader in hearing implant technology, today announced the launch of TICI UNICO, the world's first and only commercially available totally invisible cochlear implant. Designed for people with severe-to-profound hearing loss, TICI UNICO enables continuous hearing 24 hours a day while remaining completely beneath the skin. It has received CE Mark approval and is being introduced in European markets.

Cochlear implants have helped hundreds of thousands of people worldwide to hear. TICI UNICO expands hearing implant options by combining continuous hearing with complete invisibility and freedom from external audio processors. Users can hear while sleeping, exercising, showering, swimming and charging the device.

"TICI UNICO is a new chapter in the history of hearing," says Dr. Ingeborg Hochmair, co-founder and CEO of MED-EL. "For the first time, invisible hearing with a cochlear implant is possible. This is a milestone for people with hearing loss and the result of decades of research and innovation at MED-EL."

Key benefits of TICI UNICO:

- Completely invisible
- 24/7 access to sound
- No external equipment to wear, remove, or maintain
- No concerns about losing or damaging external devices
- Hearing performance comparable to established cochlear implant solutions

Long-Held Vision becomes Reality

Capturing sound through the skin has long been one of the greatest challenges in developing a totally invisible cochlear implant. MED-EL successfully developed an innovative microphone technology designed to deliver high-quality sound while remaining completely beneath the skin.

Prof. Philippe Lefèbvre, Head of the ENT Department at CHU Liège, and Prof. Joachim Müller, Associate Professor for Otology and Cochlear Implants at LMU University Hospital Munich, highlight the significance of TICI UNICO: *"Twenty-four-hour, invisible hearing opens the door to a completely new generation of hearing implants."*

For recipients, the impact extends to the freedom of hearing. Thomas, one of the first TICI UNICO recipients, says: *"I wake up hearing, fall asleep hearing, and can enjoy everyday moments without having to think about my hearing device."*

TICI UNICO is intended for people with severe-to-profound sensorineural hearing loss who may benefit from a cochlear implant. More information: <http://go.medel.com/tici>.

About MED-EL

The Austrian-based, privately owned company MED-EL was co-founded by cochlear implant pioneers Ingeborg and Erwin Hochmair. To date, MED-EL has more than 3,300 employees from around 90 nations and 30 locations worldwide.

Users in 142 countries hear with a MED-EL device. www.medel.com

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