Traumatic Wound Breakdown Following baha™ Implant

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INTRODUCTION

• The baha™ osseointegrated implant is a useful tool for hearing restoration in a variety of types of hearing loss.
• In unilateral deafness, baha™ has been shown to improve speech intelligibility in noise and ameliorate the problems of head-shadowing, while also offering a moderate benefit in sound localization.8
• Although the baha™ implant has become a common and dependable tool of the otologic surgeon, post-operative complications have been documented.1,4,5
• Minor complications such as skin necrosis, implant extrusion, and skin overgrowth occur but are uncommon, while trauma and wound infections are rare.
• Despite a severe soft tissue infection even with wound breakdown, the osseointegration is rare, if, ever, compromised, and the patient should be able to use the device successfully.
• It is important for all surgeons placing baha™ implants to recognize and manage these potential post-operative complications.

CASE REPORT

• A 49 year old male presented with a severe right sided mixed hearing loss and was treated with a baha™ osseointegrated implant.
• The patient was treated with oral antibiotics and meticulous, aggressive local wound care. Operative management was considered but not implemented.
• Full healing with ability to use the device successfully was achieved.

Conclusions:
• Although post-operative complications following baha™ surgery are infrequent and commonly mild, the surgeon will rarely be encountered by a severe soft tissue complication as described. Aggressive local wound care included culture-guided antibiotic therapy is indicated prior to performing revision surgery.

REFERENCES