

India

Caregiver Names: Srinivas & Padmaja
Age at Implantation: 7

Child: Anusha
Age Today: 28

In 2005, our daughter Anusha was seven years old and had been living with profound hearing loss since birth. At that time, cochlear implantation for children was still very new in India. **There was limited awareness, very few experienced centres, and almost no examples for parents to look up to. As parents, we were worried, confused, and uncertain about what the future would hold for our child.**



After many consultations and discussions with doctors, we decided to go ahead with cochlear implantation. In 2005, Anusha underwent unilateral cochlear implant surgery in her left ear. This decision was not easy, especially because she became the second paediatric cochlear implant patient in the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, India. Being among the earliest cases meant there were many unknowns, and we had to rely on trust, hope, and professional guidance. The journey after surgery required a lot of patience and commitment. Regular follow-ups with the help of an audiologist, therapy sessions, and continuous support became a part of our daily lives.

Progress was slow in the beginning, but we learned to value every small step forward. Education played a major role in Anusha's growth. **With consistent effort from family and teachers, she slowly gained confidence in her communication skills.** She learned to express herself, take part in class and interact socially. Her cochlear implant helped her access sound, but it was her hard work and determination that helped her succeed.

Living with a cochlear implant made her curious about hearing, sound, and communication. She developed a strong desire to help others who were facing similar challenges. This interest later guided her academic and professional path. **Anusha went on to complete her master's degree in audiology, a significant achievement that required dedication and focus.** Through her studies, she gained deep knowledge about hearing assessment, diagnosis, and rehabilitation. Her journey reached a historic milestone when she became the first cochlear implant user in India to become an audiologist. This achievement not only marked personal success but also created hope for many children and families in the cochlear implant community.

Today, Anusha is working as an audiologist at a hospital, where she received a cochlear implant in her left ear. In her professional role, she supports children and adults with hearing loss by conducting hearing tests, diagnosing conditions, counselling families, and guiding cochlear implant users. Her personal experience allows her to connect deeply with patients and parents, offering understanding, patience, and reassurance.



For families who are just beginning their cochlear implant journey, would give advice to another parent, it would be this: do not delay intervention. Trust the process and commit fully to therapy. Choose professionals who see your child's abilities, not limitations. Anusha stands as proof that children with hearing loss can grow into confident, independent professionals. Her journey shows that

cochlear implantation, when combined with consistent therapy, education, and family support, can open doors to meaningful careers and purposeful lives. As parents, we look back on this journey with pride and gratitude. The path was not easy, and there were many moments of uncertainty. However, every effort we made was for Anusha's future. Seeing her now as a professional helping others gives deep meaning to every challenge we faced.