



World Renowned Ear and Balance Institute Calls Covington Home— Experts In Treating Dizziness and Hearing Loss

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DIZZINESS, IMBALANCE, HEARING LOSS, incessant ringing in the ear: Anyone who has ever dealt with these issues knows how debilitating it can be. Dr. Gerard J. Gianoli and Dr. James S. Soileau have been treating these conditions with remarkable results for decades.

Patients from around the world—whether from physician referral or independent research—seek relief from the Ear and Balance Institute.

While both Dr. Gianoli and Dr. Soileau are board certified in Otolaryngology (ear, nose and throat), they've concentrated their practice on balance disorders, hearing loss and skull base surgery. Dr. Gianoli is one of less than 200 physicians in the country who have advanced certification in Neuro-otology

(inner ear and skull base). Because of their specific focus, the doctors have been able to create one of the most advanced hearing and balance testing labs in the world.

Housed in a brand-new facility on Ochsner Boulevard, the Ear and Balance Institute was custom designed to accommodate technological advancements, medical equipment and work flow. Separate pods house an array of equipment used to comprehensively evaluate ear-related conditions. The physicians determine the cause of symptoms and recommend treatment based on the patient's specific condition. This may range from conservative medical treatment plans, therapeutic maneuvers, hearing aids, implantable devices or more invasive surgical options.

The Epley Omniax® multi-axial chair, for example, can help diagnose patients as well as treat loose crystals in the inner ear and restore balance. One of only 18 machines in the world, the Epley chair treats people with even the most complex cases of Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo (BPPV).

Dr. Soileau explained that the Ear and Balance Institute provides hope to many patients who have spent months, even years, enduring unsuccessful treatments. "Because we are so highly specialized, we can take full advantage of tools and technology available to us."

Dr. Gianoli has expertise in all forms of ear and skull base surgery such as cochlear implants and skull based tumor removal. He routinely performs surgical procedures for

the treatment of vertigo and dizziness that have not responded to medications or physical therapy.

Because of their extensive research, evaluation capabilities and treatment options, the Ear and Balance Institute is frequently consulted for expert opinions from both the legal and medical communities. Additionally, they assist with manufacturers' beta testing of medical equipment.

"We have diagnostic tools not available in most clinical settings," Dr. Gianoli said. For example, elevated intracranial pressure can cause problems with hearing loss, dizziness, headaches and visual loss. In the past, the only way to identify this problem was with a spinal tap. The Tympanic Membrane Displacement Analyzer measures intracranial pressure painlessly and non-invasively, allowing for a much more comfortable experience. Drs. Gianoli and Soileau have just completed a research project with NASA on the utility of this device. "NASA wants to use this device to measure the intracranial pressure of the astronauts in space. However, this can also be very useful back here on earth."

The Ear and Balance Institute is not just on the cutting edge of research and technology, it is also a pioneer in the "third-party free" concept of healthcare.

Dr. Gianoli explained that by separating themselves from health plans, they are able

to provide more comprehensive medical testing and treatment. "We have positioned our practice to allow us to work for our patients, not the insurance companies."

The uniqueness of the practice allows patients more direct contact with the doctors. "A one hour appointment is allotted for every new patient visit," Dr. Gianoli said. "Patients are not rushed through office visits, but rather encouraged to fully discuss their symptoms and history in an effort to address all of the individualized aspects of these often complex conditions. This approach, along with their continued success, brings patients from near, far and abroad each month seeking evaluation and treatment,"

It is comforting to know that there are highly trained experts in the areas of imbalance and hearing loss in our own backyard. However, the office also treats patients who do not suffer from highly specialized conditions.

The Audiology section of the practice, headed by Kacie S. Harvey, AuD, handles hearing loss and hearing conservation needs—at prices comparable to general hearing aid dispensaries.

Dr. Harvey fits patients with hearing



FAR LEFT: Dr. Gianoli demonstrates the Epley Omniax® Chair used to diagnose Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo. ABOVE: Doctors and staff at The Ear & Balance Institute. BELOW LEFT: Dr. Gerard J. Gianoli, Dr. Kacie S. Harvey and Dr. James S. Soileau pose for a photo in their office.

aids and provides other hearing related services, such as hearing protection and swim molds, which meet the highest level of hearing healthcare standards.

Her specialized education, coupled with her work with Drs. Gianoli and Soileau, enable her to evaluate and provide highly effective treatment strategies. Through a comprehensive audiometric test and examination, she is able to offer a wide choice of hearing aids, from basic models to innovative technology systems.

"Often, patients have had an unsuccessful or unpleasant hearing aid experience, or have heard stories about expensive hearing aids that sit in a drawer. They are left with the misconception that hearing aids don't work, but this is not true. With appropriate hearing aid technology customized to meet the patient's needs and an expert fit, a hearing aid can add quality to the life of someone with hearing loss and those around them. I see it every day."

"Our goal is to achieve optimal hearing improvement through hearing loss education, exploration of all available options ranging from conventional to surgical, and making appropriate recommendations regarding auditory health," Dr. Harvey said. This plan for success, together with their specialized focus and expert staff of doctors, designates the Ear and Balance Institute as a world-renowned practice right here on the Northshore. ☞

The Ear and Balance Institute is located at 1401 Ochsner Boulevard, Suite A in Covington. To learn more, call them at 985-809-1111 or find them online at earandbalance.net

