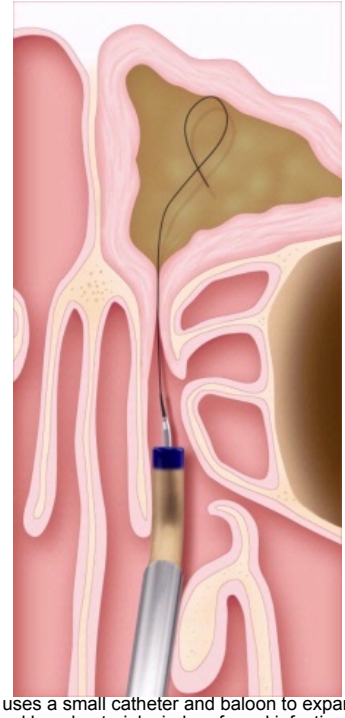
The Balloon Sinuplasty

Experts estimate that sinusitis affects approximately 37 million Americans each year.



Baloon sinuplasty uses a small catheter and baloon to expand blocked sinuses.

Sinusitis is an inflammation of the sinus lining that can be caused by a bacterial, viral, or fungal infection, as well as by structural issues such as blockages of the sinus opening or “ostium.” If the ostium is closed, normal drainage cannot occur, which can lead to infection or inflammation.

At Eisenhower, patients now have an alternative and minimally invasive sinusitis treatment option — Balloon Sinuplasty™, a new technology developed by Acclarent, Inc.™. Balloon Sinuplasty technology is similar in concept to catheters used in the heart for balloon angioplasty. With Sinuplasty, a small flexible balloon catheter is placed through the nostril into the blocked nasal passage. The balloon is then inflated to gently restructure and open the nasal passageway, restoring normal sinus drainage and function.

The device enables physicians to treat chronic sinusitis entirely through the nostrils, and in many cases without tissue or bone removal. While recovery time varies by patient, some patients can return to normal activities within 24 hours. Since the technology was introduced four years ago, more than 100,000 patients in the United States have been successfully treated with Balloon Sinuplasty.

Acute and Chronic

There are two types of sinusitis — acute and chronic. Acute sinusitis usually follows a cold, flu, allergy attack, or environmental irritation. The symptoms associated with a cold or allergies, such as nasal congestion and nasal pressure, usually disappear with the cold. However, if the symptoms persist, a bacterial infection or acute sinusitis can occur. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most cases of acute sinusitis are caused by a virus. If a patient suffers repeated episodes of sinusitis, or if the symptoms last three months or longer, they may be suffering from chronic sinusitis.

Eisenhower is one of the few facilities in the Coachella Valley to offer the Balloon Sinuplasty option for patients with chronic sinusitis. Eisenhower Otolaryngologist and Surgeon Eric Nash, MD, was one of the first physicians in the area to treat patients with the Balloon Sinuplasty. “Chronic sinusitis can be quite painful and debilitating, particularly in the desert, where dry air can aggravate inflammation,” says Dr. Nash.

Sinusitis is typically treated first with medication such as antibiotics or steroid nasal sprays designed to reduce swelling and inflammation. Inhaling steam or flushing the sinus passages with saline solution can also provide relief. However, at least 20 percent of chronic sinusitis patients do not respond to medication, and they usually look to surgery as their only option. Until recently, the standard surgical procedure was Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery (FESS), which opens up blocked nasal passages by removing bone and tissue to enlarge the opening. For some patients the surgery can lead to post-operative pain and bleeding, with varying recovery times. “Balloon Sinuplasty offers the benefits of traditional FESS surgery, but it is a minimally invasive procedure,” explains Dr.Nash.“For most patients, that means shorter recovery times and less post-operative pain and bleeding…with the same benefits that FESS provides.”

Symptoms of Sinusitis

Facial pain, pressure, nasal congestion, difficulty breathing through the nose, discharge of mucus through the nose, teeth pain, loss of smell or taste, headache, fatigue, sore throat, bad breath are symptoms of sinusitis

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