



NEWS RELEASE

For more information contact:

Tracy Heaser, Marketing Communications Coordinator

WORK:(920) 429-1752, CELL: (920) 819-1798, EMAIL: tracyh@prevea.com

Prevea Health Introduces Balloon Sinuplasty

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GREEN BAY, Wis. —*January 6, 2009*— Prevea Health is proud to announce that it now offers balloon sinuplasty, the latest procedures for treatment of chronic sinusitis (sinus infection). The technology utilizes a small, flexible balloon catheter that is placed into the nose to reach the sinuses. The balloon is gradually inflated, causing the blocked sinus opening to gently widen and permanently restructure itself, thus allowing for better sinus function and a relief of chronic congestion. Compared to the traditional treatment of surgically removing bone and tissue, patients who have had balloon sinuplasty have minimal bleeding, less need for pain medications, and many are able to return to normal activities within 24 hours.

For Janetta Smith, balloon sinuplasty has been a blessing. She had been suffering from sinus infections and bronchitis all through winter and into spring every year for a while. She was constantly on antibiotics, and the steroid prednisone, which made the 83-year-old dizzy. “I was just miserable,” said Smith.

She wound up at the office of Prevea Health Ear, Nose and Throat specialist Dr. James Clemens. After performing a CT scan, Dr. Clemens determined that her nasal passages were closed, which prevented proper sinus drainage and contributed to her constant sinus infections. Recognizing Smith as a prime candidate for surgery, Dr. Clemens offered her the option of staying on antibiotics or having balloon sinuplasty surgery.

Clinical research has indicated that balloon sinuplasty is a safe and effective way to dilate blocked sinuses, and is a better option for many patients. A study of 1,036 patients at multiple institutions reported that sinus symptoms improved in 96% of patients at an average follow-up period of 10 months. In all published clinical data, no serious adverse events attributable to the balloon sinuplasty procedure were reported.

Dr. Clemens performed Smith’s balloon sinuplasty procedure on October 6. “I figured I would be on antibiotics for another six weeks, and there was no guarantee that would help,” said Smith.

“Then I read that prednisone was not good for bones, and I already had osteoporosis. That is why I decided to do the surgery.”

Balloon sinuplasty is an out-patient procedure, and Smith was able to go home the same day. The procedure itself took about half an hour, and Smith said that except for a moment where she bent over quickly to put on her shoes, she had no bleeding. “They sent me home with some pain pills, but I never took any. I had maybe a little headache the day of the surgery, but I really didn’t feel any pain.”

“Janetta was an excellent candidate for this procedure. Balloon sinuplasty can be an excellent treatment option when used in the appropriate patient,” said Dr. Clemens. “Not everyone is a candidate for this procedure, however,” he added.

By her follow-up visit a week later, Smith said, “Already I could breathe better.” She said she was no longer wheezing, and her husband Virgil reported sleeping better because Smith wasn’t “making so much noise at night.” Smith also stated her chronic hoarseness had significantly improved. “Dr. Clemens said I looked good, and I went back again two weeks after that, and that’s when he said I wouldn’t have to come back.”

Dr. Clemens and fellow Ear, Nose and Throat specialist Dr. Scott Hunt both perform the procedure at Prevea Health. Dr. Hunt and Dr. Clemens have a combined 30 years of sinus surgery experience. “Balloon Sinuplasty is a new, less-invasive tool within our armamentarium for performing sinus work,” said Dr. Hunt, adding, “We believe this procedure can greatly improve the outcomes for our chronic sinusitis patients, without significantly restricting their lifestyle while they recover.”

For Smith, that rang true. “One thing I couldn’t do was lay on the floor on back and do my exercises, because of drainage, for about a month,” she said, “but I could ride an exercise bike and otherwise I could do just about everything else.”

Smith adds, “I would do it again, no matter what my age was, because it was so much better. It was the easiest surgery that I ever had in my lifetime. I’d say it was a piece of cake!”

Prevea Health’s mission is to take care of people with passion, pride, and respect. Founded in 1996, Prevea Health partners with St. Mary’s and St. Vincent Hospitals in Green Bay, and St. Nicholas Hospital in Sheboygan to provide access to more than 200 providers in over 50 specialty areas. Prevea’s 20 locations are throughout metropolitan Green Bay and in Kewaunee, Marinette, Oconto, Plymouth, Pulaski, Seymour, Sheboygan and Sturgeon Bay. Visit www.prevea.com for more information.

###