



Breathe Easier, Better

Relieve anatomical obstruction, congestion with advanced nasal implant procedure

Breathing is the most essential of all of life's fundamental functions. It is also an act that a lot of people seldom, if ever, think about and often take for granted. That is, until they suddenly find it difficult to do.



DEVANG SHAH, MD
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Sherry Hunter can't remember the last time she took breathing for granted, because she can barely remember a time when allergies and sinus problems didn't hinder her ability to carry out this most basic bodily function.

"I've suffered from really bad allergies and sinus issues all my life, and they've always made it very hard for me to breathe," says Sherry, 71. "There have been times when it was so hard for me to breathe that I couldn't even eat.

"I'm not kidding. I was so stuffed up that I literally could not breathe through my nose, so I had to breathe through my mouth. Doing that and trying to eat at the same time is hard. It's very uncomfortable, and sometimes when your nose is all stuffed up, it's very painful."

Over the years, Sherry tried alleviating her breathing issues by taking over-the-counter allergy medications, but they only provided minimal, temporary relief. Finally, one day earlier this year, her sister suggested a better solution.

"My sister has some breathing issues herself, and she had been to this place where they did an in-office procedure for her, and she was really happy with the results," Sherry explains. "She thought they might be able to help me, too, and suggested I give it a try."



Devang Shah, MD, is board certified in otolaryngology. After receiving his medical degree with honors from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, he completed his surgical internship and residency at Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1997. Dr. Shah is a member of the American Academy of Otolaryngology

– Head & Neck Surgery and has served as chair of the department of surgery at Florida Hospital Fish Memorial, Orange City. He coauthored several journal articles investigating the relationship between microscopic inner-ear structures and hearing function and has presented his work at research conferences.



Daniel L. Rothbaum, MD, is board certified in otolaryngology and specializes in facial plastic surgery and otolaryngology. He's a leader in balloon sinus dilation surgery in Central Florida. Dr. Rothbaum graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College in Cambridge,

MA with a degree in social studies. He received his Medical Doctorate (MD) degree from Yale School of Medicine in New Haven, CT. Dr. Rothbaum completed his internship and residency training at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

The place Sherry's sister recommended is Atlantic Ear, Nose & Throat, where a dedicated team provides comprehensive, state-of-the-art care for a wide range of disorders, including those stemming from allergy and sinus issues.

A Simple Test

Sherry's experience at Atlantic ENT began with the team conducting an allergy test and a *CT scan* of her sinuses. It was soon discovered that her breathing problems were the result of something much greater than allergies.

"She had a blocked sinus," explains Devang Shah, MD, a board-certified otolaryngologist at Atlantic ENT. "She also had a *deviated septum*, the septum being the cartilage that divides the two sides of the nasal cavity. In Sherry's case, it was crooked.

"On top of that, we also noticed that her nostrils were collapsing when she took a deep breath. We discovered that problem by putting a little probe into the nostrils and pulling them laterally a little bit.

"You can also test for that by simply pulling sideways on the skin between the nose and cheek. That pulls the nostril open, and if you do that and the patient can breathe better, you know a *nasal valve collapse* is part of the issue."

After making his discoveries, Dr. Shah explained to Sherry that surgery to repair the blocked sinus and deviated septum would help alleviate her symptoms, but that the real key to her breathing better lay in correcting the collapsing nasal valve.

He further explained that the surgery to correct that problem used to require a cartilage graft, in which a piece of cartilage from another part of the body is used to attach the collapsing cartilage to the septum, thereby providing increased support.

He noted that the same results can now be achieved through the insertion of a cartilage alternative called the *LATERA® Absorbable Nasal Implant*. This procedure, Dr. Shah added, takes less time and is equally effective, which is why he recommended it for Sherry.

"The technology has evolved to the point where this procedure is more widely available and easier for patients to tolerate," Dr. Shah relates. "And in Sherry's case, it added only a few more minutes to the total time required for her surgery.

"When compared to the time needed to perform the traditional surgery, where you have to harvest the cartilage and make a wider opening to get that cartilage in there, you're talking about a time savings of thirty to forty-five minutes. That's significant."



Sherry Hunter

During the implant procedure, which can be done in a doctor's office under *IV sedation* or in a surgery center in association with another procedure under *general anesthesia*, the *LATERA* nasal implant is inserted into the nasal wall or cartilage through an insertion tube.

Similar to dissolvable sutures, the *LATERA* nasal implant is made of special materials that are naturally absorbed into the body over the course of about 18 months. Its impact is immediate, and following completion of the absorption period, its effects continue to be felt for approximately six more months.

Because the implant is placed inside the nasal wall, it cannot be seen and does not alter the patient's appearance. Some patients sense the awareness of the implant during the healing stage but generally do not notice it after a few days or a couple of weeks.

and it's very hard to do that when you're having trouble breathing. But I'm able to do that more often now without any trouble at all, and that is so gratifying."

Dr. Shah says the results Sherry experienced are typical of most patients who receive the *LATERA* nasal implant. He says that's one of the biggest reasons he prefers performing that procedure over the more invasive option.

"It's really a gratifying experience when you have a patient such as Sherry, who comes to you just wishing they could breathe easier, and you're able to help them," he says. "They usually come in for their first post-op visit saying, *I'm breathing so much better now*, and that is great to hear."

Dr. Shah heard those very words from Sherry, who gives Dr. Shah and the entire staff at Atlantic ENT high marks for the care she received.

"Everyone there is so nice and professional and caring. I'm so grateful they were able to find a solution for my breathing problem," she enthuses. "I feel like a different person, thanks to them. I really feel great."

FHCN article by Roy Cummings. Photo by Nerissa Johnson. LATERA graphics courtesy of Spirox. Cloud graphic courtesy of kisspng. Sky photo courtesy of Dreamstime. mkb



Once it is placed in the nasal wall (above) the *LATERA Absorbable Nasal Implant* (below) allows for easier breathing by supporting the nose's upper and lower lateral cartilage.



The New Normal

What Sherry noticed most after she had the implant procedure done was the difference it made in her breathing. She says that once she healed from the surgery to restructure her septum and unblock her sinuses, she breathed normally again for the first time in years.

"The difference was absolutely amazing," Sherry marvels. "All of a sudden, I was having no problem breathing at all. I honestly can't remember the last time I was able to breathe so easily the way I can now.

"And boy, what a difference that has made in my life. I really like to exercise,

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