

SINUS STENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Food and Drug Administration approved the first stent that releases steroid into operated sinuses in 2011. The stent is made of a material that dissolves naturally and does not require removal. The steroid coating on the stent is useful in patients with sinusitis because steroids are helpful in decreasing inflammation. Sinus stents help prevent surgical openings from forming scar tissue after sinus surgery is complete.

USES

Once a sinus is opened surgically, a steroid releasing stent can be placed in the sinus cavity. The steroid helps to decrease inflammation. It also aids in wound healing by preventing scar tissue from forming. The stents can be placed during sinus surgery or after. Steroid releasing stents are particularly helpful in patients that have polyps, high levels of inflammation or anatomy that can cause the sinus to close off.

Since 2011, steroid sinus stents have been used during sinus surgery. Research studies have shown effectiveness in decreasing the blockage of sinus openings after surgery, polyp recurrence, and the need for repeat sinus surgery.

Sinus stents can be placed in the sinuses between the eyes, in the forehead (See Figure 1) and in the cheeks. The stents release steroid into the surrounding tissue. There is also a sinus stent for use only in the sinuses between the eyes which can release steroid for 90 days. This longer acting stent is used in patients who have had prior ethmoid sinus surgery and experience a regrowth of nasal polyps.

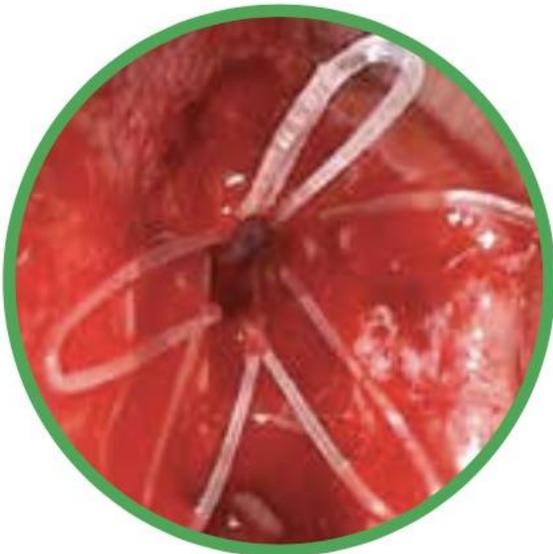


Figure 1. Sinus stent in place in the frontal sinus opening

ADVERSE EFFECTS

Steroid releasing stents are well tolerated. Because the steroid medication is delivered directly to the sinus tissue very little is absorbed by the rest of the body. This means that side effects of the medication are rare. Stents are typically placed at the time of surgery while the patient is under anesthesia and cannot feel the procedure. However, they can also be placed in the sinuses of an awake patient in the office setting without significant discomfort. Rarely patients may report pressure or headache in the area where the stent is placed. Stents should not be used in patients with allergies to the steroid.

SUMMARY

Steroid releasing sinus stents help to treat inflammation in patients with chronic sinusitis. They are effective at limiting polyp recurrence and reducing rates of repeat sinus surgery. They are generally well tolerated but some adverse effects have been reported.

Copyright © 2020 by The American Rhinologic Society

The American Rhinologic Society presents this information as a service to current, past and future patients of its members as well as its membership. All information is believed to be accurate and true. Diligent efforts have been made to ensure objectivity and balance. The American Rhinologic Society, its Board of Directors, its Officers, its representatives, and its members are not responsible for any errors and/or omissions. The American Rhinologic Society cannot provide specific medical advice to patients via the Internet. All patients are encouraged to direct their specific questions to their personal physicians. The American Rhinologic Society presents this information for patients so that patients can understand and participate in their own medical care