



Balloon sinuplasty is a minimally invasive, in-office procedure that opens blocked sinus passages using a small, flexible balloon — without removing any tissue. When combined with turbinate reduction, it addresses both sinus obstruction and nasal airway congestion in a single visit. For patients with mild to moderate sinus disease that hasn't responded to medications, this procedure delivers results comparable to traditional sinus surgery — with a fraction of the recovery time.

Why Balloon Sinuplasty Instead of Full FESS?

Traditional FESS (Functional Endoscopic Sinus Surgery) is highly effective but requires general anesthesia, carries a 7–10 day recovery, and is best suited for advanced sinus disease. Balloon sinuplasty offers a compelling alternative when your disease is mild to moderate and refractory to medical treatment:

- Performed entirely in the office under oral sedation — no hospital required
- No tissue removed, no packing, no external incisions
- Most patients return to normal activity within 24–48 hours
- Clinical outcomes are comparable to FESS for appropriately selected patients
- Can be repeated if needed without compromising future surgical options

What Happens During the Procedure?

- You will take oral sedation (Halcion + Norco) approximately 45–60 minutes before the procedure begins
- Topical anesthetic is applied inside the nose — you will feel numbness and pressure, not sharp pain
- A small endoscope is used to visualize your sinuses directly
- A thin guidewire is gently advanced into the blocked sinus opening
- A small balloon is inflated to gently widen the opening, then removed — the sinus drainage pathway stays open
- Turbinate reduction is performed at the same time to open the nasal airway
- The entire procedure typically takes 45–75 minutes

What Will I Feel?

The oral sedation will make you relaxed and drowsy but you will remain conscious and able to follow instructions. Pressure and a sensation of fullness are normal during balloon inflation. Some patients feel a brief pop as the sinus opens — this is expected and is a sign the procedure is working.

Before Your Procedure — What to Do

- **Do not eat or drink anything for 4 hours before your appointment**
- Arrange a driver — you cannot drive yourself home after oral sedation. You should not drive for the remainder of the day
- Take your normal daily medications with a small sip of water unless told otherwise
- Wear comfortable, loose clothing — you will be reclined during the procedure
- Fill your prescriptions before the day of surgery: antibiotic, Nasacort nasal spray, and your sedation medications will be called in ahead of time

Medications Before Your Appointment

Your sedation medications — **Halcion (triazolam)** and **Norco (hydrocodone/acetaminophen)** — will be prescribed in advance. Take them exactly as directed at the instructed time before your appointment. **Do not take any extra doses before arriving.**

What to Expect Afterward

- Some nasal congestion, drainage, and mild pressure are expected for the first several days as the sinuses heal
- A burning sensation in the nose may occur **1–2 hours after the procedure** as the topical anesthetic wears off — this is normal and temporary
- Most patients feel significantly better within 24–48 hours
- You will start **saline rinses the day after your procedure** — this is one of the most important things you can do to support healing

Medications After Your Procedure

- **Norco:** any remaining tablets may be used for severe pain — take only as needed
- **Halcion:** do not take any remaining Halcion tablets after the procedure
- **Motrin (ibuprofen) and Tylenol (acetaminophen)** are recommended for most post-procedure discomfort — alternate every 4–6 hours
- **Antibiotics:** a 5-day course is prescribed to prevent infection — complete the full course
- **Nasacort nasal spray:** resume use after rinsing — 2 sprays each nostril twice daily. Do not skip this step; it is essential to long-term results

Your Follow-Up

A follow-up appointment is typically scheduled 1–2 weeks after your procedure. At this visit your surgeon will examine your sinuses, evaluate your healing, and answer any questions.

★ TOP TAKEAWAYS

Why This Works

Chronic sinus disease is caused by swollen, blocked drainage pathways that trap mucus and bacteria. The balloon gently reshapes the bony sinus opening, restoring drainage without removing any of the lining tissue that produces mucus and helps filter air. Turbinate reduction simultaneously relieves nasal obstruction — together they restore the entire nasal-sinus airway.

Who Is This Procedure For?

Ideal candidates have documented chronic or recurrent sinusitis that has not responded to 6–8 weeks of nasal steroids, saline rinses, and antibiotic treatment. CT scan confirming mild to moderate sinus disease without significant polyps or anatomic complexity is typical. Your surgeon has determined you are an excellent candidate.

Questions You Might Have

Will I be asleep?

No — you will be awake but comfortably sedated with oral medication. You will be relaxed and drowsy and will not remember much of the procedure. General anesthesia is not required.

How soon will I notice improvement?

Many patients notice improved breathing within the first week. Full benefit is typically appreciated at 4–6 weeks once swelling fully resolves and the sinuses have healed.

Can the sinuses re-close?

The sinus opening is structurally reshaped, not just stretched. Ongoing Nasacort use and saline rinsing significantly reduce the chance of re-narrowing. If symptoms recur, the procedure can be repeated or escalated to FESS if needed.

Ask your surgeon any questions before the procedure — we want you to feel confident and informed going into your appointment.