



# Institute of Esophageal and Reflux Surgery

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303-788-7700 | 10099 Ridgeway Pkwy Ste 110 Lone Tree, CO 80124

## STRETTA INFORMATION SHEET AND DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

### FOLLOW-UP:

We will call you the day after surgery, and at 2 and 6 weeks after surgery, unless other arrangements have been made. If you have questions/concerns before then, please feel free to email [info@iersurgery.com](mailto:info@iersurgery.com) or call the office at 303-788-7700.

Having a successful long-term outcome from your surgery is very important to us. Please be in touch with us if you have concerns. We will also be reaching out to you at 6 months and then yearly after surgery with a quality of life survey. Please take the time to answer these surveys- they don't take long and they are very important to Dr. Bell.

### What is STRETTA?

- **The STRETTA catheter is a specially designed, FDA approved, device with a balloon and four needles. The catheter is connected to a control module, which delivers precisely monitored and controlled amounts of radiofrequency energy to the lower esophageal sphincter muscle or LES.**
- **The entire procedure consists of two parts. Initially, an upper endoscopy or EGD is performed while the patient is sedated. This allows the physician to take precise measurements of the distance from the mouth to the LES or sphincter muscle between the esophagus and stomach. After measuring the distance, the physician will insert the STRETTA catheter, through the mouth, to the specifically measured distance. The balloon is inflated, the needles pushed into the muscle of the sphincter, and radio-frequency energy is transmitted via the needles.**

### How does the STRETTA procedure correct GERD?

- When the STRETTA procedure is performed, radio-frequency energy is transmitted via the needles in the STRETTA catheter. This creates pinpoint areas of heat in the sphincter muscle, which in turn stimulates the muscle causing an increase in muscle bundles and muscle fibers in each bundle. The net effect is that the sphincter is remodeled and becomes thicker, stronger and longer (like the muscles of a weight lifter).
- There are two predominant effects, which then occur. The first effect is largely temporary and can be thought of as the barrier effect. There is an immediate swelling or edema of the tissue, which is followed by the body depositing a substance called collagen into the sphincter muscle. The thickened area helps to immediately reduce the reflux of stomach contents into the esophagus.

### What to expect after the STRETTA procedure:

- Immediately after the procedure, due to the sedation, you may expect to feel very tired for the remainder of the day. Some patients have a sore throat or mild soreness in the chest area. You will be able to eat with some mild dietary restrictions and resume your normal medications immediately after the procedure. When eating you may experience a sensation of the food moving slowly down into your stomach.
- You must continue your acid controlling medications, until instructed otherwise, by your physician for at least an additional 4-8 weeks.
- Your reflux symptoms are not expected to improve immediately. The effects usually develop slowly over time. It is very important that you do not expect immediate results. It may sometimes take as long as 8-12 months before the final improvements take place



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## DO's and DON'TS:

1. Do *not* eat any foods with hard or sharp edges for 4-5 days, such as chips, pretzels, nuts or popcorn. Chew your food well and do not eat rapidly.
2. Do *not* forget to take your acid reducing medication, such as Prilosec, Prevacid, Protonix, Aciphex, Dexilant or Nexium, for at least the first month after your procedure. If you are not taking these medications you must immediately tell your doctor.
3. Do resume normal activities as tolerated, including exercise, the day following the STRETTA procedure.
4. Do call your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following:
  - a. Severe chest or abdominal pain
  - b. Nausea or vomiting
  - c. Fever (over 101.5) or chills
  - d. Vomiting of blood or coffee ground appearing material
  - e. Bloody or black tarry looking stools
  - f. Difficulty swallowing
  - g. Difficulty breathing

## Side Effects

**The main side effect experienced after a STRETTA procedure is chest discomfort or pain. The discomfort ranges from a mild sensation of pressure or aching to intense pain. Up to 50% of patients experience chest discomfort and only 1-2% have severe pain. Your physician will supply you with detailed instructions on what medications to take for the pain and a prescription for a strong pain medication. The pain will normally only last 1~5 days, but rarely up to 1-2 weeks. If you have any questions at all contact your physician.**

## How fast will I get better?

This is the both the most frequent and most important question. It is very important to not expect an immediate or instant improvement after the procedure. It takes at least 2 weeks for the tissue to heal, which is when a few patients may begin to experience some initial relief from their symptoms. Everyone is different in their ability to

## QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS:

For non-urgent questions, you may email [info@iersurgery.com](mailto:info@iersurgery.com). Please allow 24-48 hours for response. If you have an *urgent* issue that cannot wait until normal office hours, please call the office 303-788-7700 and a provider will be paged.