



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NEW APPROACH TO SINUS SURGERY IMPROVES PATIENT SAFETY AND OUTCOME**

*Minimally invasive sinus surgery using image-guidance technology offers patients less pain, fewer complications, and a quicker recovery*

**OSHKOSH, WI. (August 17, 2006)** – If you’ve tried numerous medications (antibiotics, nasal sprays, antihistamines, decongestants) for recurrent sinusitis, your physician may recommend sinus surgery. An Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) physician group in the Fox Valley now offers a minimally invasive surgical procedure that gently unclogs sinus passages by enlarging the natural openings without damaging the mucus membranes. This outpatient surgery is performed through tiny incisions using millimeter-sized instruments, and patients report only minor discomfort and less swelling compared to older surgical techniques. This minimally invasive procedure takes sinus surgery to a new level by reducing the risk of complications and allowing patients to return to their normal activities within days.



Chronic sinus problems are one of the fastest growing medical problems in the U.S. Left undiagnosed and untreated, sinus disease can cause complications with the lungs, nose, eyes, and ears that may last for months or even years. If you suffer from facial pressure, nasal congestion, decreased sense of smell, or chronic running nose, you may have sinusitis. Your physician will want to know about your symptoms and how you have tried to relieve them. Because medicines clear most bouts of sinusitis, surgery should only be considered when prolonged medical therapy fails to resolve these symptoms.

When sinus surgery is recommended, a new approach now offered by the Fox Valley's Ear, Nose, and Throat Specialists of Wisconsin uses image-guided computer technology to perform a safer and often less painful procedure. Image-guidance technology allows the surgeon to pinpoint the precise location of diseased sinus areas while maneuvering around delicate neighboring structures such as the eyes, carotid artery, and brain. A three-dimensional mapping system, image-guidance combines computed tomography (CT) scans with real-time information during surgery about the exact position of surgical instruments through a computer interface. In this way, surgeons can navigate their surgical instruments through complex sinus passages more accurately and safely. Besides the new technology, surgeons have adopted a tissue-sparing minimally invasive approach to gently open blocked sinus drainage outflow tracts. This minimally invasive



approach, often done through incisions as small as a few millimeters, purports to be less damaging to normal areas in the sinuses, with less post-operative discomfort, and a quicker recovery time.

Although many surgeons have switched to the minimally invasive approach, some ENT surgeons still use a procedure called the “sinus clean-out” concept or “Roto-Router of the sinuses” method. This procedure has the risk of being more destructive to the sinuses since it involves stripping the mucus membranes from the sinuses, forcing the sinuses to re-grow new mucus membrane lining occasionally resulting in scarring of the sinus linings. This more radical approach can be more painful and can lead to a lengthier recovery period.

Larry Burton, M.D., a board certified head and neck surgeon from Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists of Wisconsin states, “The most important step in treating a patient’s sinus disease is making the correct diagnosis. Although sinus surgery is not appropriate for all sinus sufferers, patients with chronic disease (sinusitis lasting three months) or patients with multiple-recurrent bouts of acute sinusitis may be candidates for sinus surgery.

There are multiple factors that can lead to prolonged or recurrent sinus disease in patients – viral, bacterial or fungal organisms, allergy, inflammation from inhaled airborne irritants, anatomical reasons such as narrow sinus openings, and even the patient’s ability to fight off infections.”



All four physicians at Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists of Wisconsin (Robert Bechard, MD; Robert Prehn, MD; Christopher Keller, MD; and Larry Burton, MD) perform the minimally invasive sinus surgery with image-guidance technology at several local hospitals. To learn more about sinus problems and other medical conditions relating to the head and neck, visit [www.entwis.com](http://www.entwis.com).

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*With six convenient office locations in the Fox Cities and surrounding communities, the board certified surgeons and staff at Ear, Nose and Throat Specialists of Wisconsin have extensive experience in treating head and neck problems for the entire family. To make an appointment, call 1-800-435-4851 or 920-303-4130.*