

Balloon dilation for chronic eustachian tube dysfunction

Information for the public

Published: 18 December 2019

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This procedure works well for chronic eustachian tube dysfunction and there are no serious concerns about its safety.

The eustachian tube connects the middle ear with the back of the nose. If the tube is blocked or does not open properly (dysfunction), it can cause muffled hearing, pain, a feeling of fullness in the ear, ringing in the ear or dizziness. In this procedure, a thin flexible tube with a small balloon is inserted via the nose and into the eustachian tube. An endoscope (a thin tube with a camera on the end) is used to guide the process. Once in position, the balloon is filled with slightly salty sterile water (saline). It is then left in place for around 2 minutes before being emptied and removed. The aim is to widen the eustachian tube and improve how it works and relieve symptoms.

The [NHS website](#) may be a good place to find out more. NICE's information on [HealthTech guidance](#) has more about what a procedure is and how we assess them.

Is this procedure right for me?

If you've been offered this procedure, your healthcare professionals should discuss with you what is involved, and tell you about the risks and benefits. They should talk with you about your options, and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. All of this should happen before you agree (consent) to have the procedure. You should also be told how to find more information about the procedure.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Some questions to think about

- What does the procedure involve?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- What happens if the procedure doesn't work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I don't want the procedure? Are there other treatments available?

ISBN: 978-1-4731-8004-8