

Device offers relief from sneezing and runny nose

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Credit: Rush University Medical Center

A new treatment that delivers a freezing or near-freezing temperature to the back of the nose can offer relief to people suffering from chronic stuffy or runny nose, postnasal drip and cough. These symptoms result from persistently inflamed nose and sinuses, a condition known as

chronic rhinitis.

Called ClariFix, the treatment is a form of cryotherapy – the use of cold temperatures as a medical treatment—that targets out-of-balance nerves that result in chronic rhinitis. These faulty nerves tell the nose to drip, run and swell more than necessary.

The ClariFix device includes a small, chilled pad on a thin stem that is inserted through a nostril and applied to a targeted spot inside the nasal cavity. The freezing temperature interrupts the errant nerve signals, preventing them from triggering runny, stuffy noses. Specifically, ClariFix interrupts the neural pathway, a connection between parts of the nervous system that triggers rhinitis symptoms.

Rush University Medical Center ear, nose and throat specialists offer treatment to patients using ClariFix cryotherapy, which provides long-lasting relief and is the first and only FDA-cleared device for treating chronic rhinitis.

"Longstanding runny nose and congestion can slowly deprive patients of their quality of life. In the past, medications were the only option that could be offered to our patients. The introduction of ClariFix now offers the possibility of a more definitive solution that has the potential to offer long-lasting relief from rhinitis symptoms," said Dr. Pete Batra, professor and chairperson of the Department of Otorhinolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery at Rush.

More than 24 million Americans suffer from the frustrating symptoms caused by chronic rhinitis.

Traditional medical treatments such as nasal sprays, drops and pills can help manage chronic rhinitis symptoms for some people, but often does not address the underlying problem and may have side effects.

ClariFix cryotherapy is a proven treatment option that can be performed in the office. After a numbing medication has been inserted into the patient's nose and left in place for 10 to 15 minutes, the patient receives the 30 second treatment on each side and can return to work after the procedure. The most common side effects associated with ClariFix cryotherapy are temporary increased congestion and transient pain or discomfort, which normally resolved or is mild after 1 to 2 days. Many patients rate pain as minor.

Clinical study results published in October showed that the treatment was well-tolerated with no device or procedure-related adverse events. After treatment, there was an improvement in runny nose and congestion symptoms and four out of five patients reported long-lasting symptom improvement. Results were similar in both allergic and non-allergic rhinitis patients.

Provided by Rush University Medical Center

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