

- What is the Reltok airway and how did you come up with it?

The **Reltok Clear-Flo™ Nasal Airway** is a pair of soft, medical grade silicone tubes, connected by a bridge at the front openings. The bridge prevents the tubes from slipping into the throat. They are akin to drinking straws with large diameter passages to allow airflow through the nose, directly to the lungs despite the nasal passages being blocked by either medically necessary medical “packing” or if unpacked, dried blood and or mucus. It guarantees satisfactory breathing in the immediate post-operative period after any nasal and/or sinus surgery.

The idea that novel device, came from the “demand” of a patient, “Todd” that I “guarantee clear breathing “after his forthcoming surgery. He was a veteran of an unsuccessful rhinoplasty and breathing operation that was accompanied by an “intolerable recovery because I could not breathe, felt I was choking, because very anxious and claustrophobic and could not sleep. I was determined to have suffer like that again.” I was given a specific challenge by a very determined patient and I did create a crude, but effective double airway for Todd that met his needs. The revision surgery was successful, the patient’s experience was satisfactory and tolerable. I then realized there were many patients whose reluctance to have a reliable and successful surgery to improve appearance and create satisfactory breathing to overcome the effects of a prior broken nose or allergy was based on fear of the post-operative period, not the operation itself.

- How long have you been doing nasal surgeries and why did you see a need for Reltok?

51 years experience, military and civilian practice.

The need arose from the experience noted above. “The lightbulb went on”. I realized that surgeons were failing to realize that were NOT providing the optimal post-operative experience. And as we developed various prototypes, we also realized that we had a likely gift of further anesthesia safety. Patient comfort and satisfaction plus an additional aid to heighten patient safety in the Operating and Recovery Rooms were superb reasons to bring this to every surgeon who does nasal/sinus surgery. What doctor would not favor patient comfort, satisfaction and safety?

- What should patients know about The Reltok Airway?

Nearly all new, patented FDA-cleared medical devices are surgery enhancers. They aid in performing a more complete, safe and perhaps shorter operation. They are better tools for the surgeon’s craft.

The **Reltok Clear-Flo™ Nasal Airway** is not about the operation, i.e., the cutting and sewing, it is “all about the patient.” His or her comfort, satisfaction and safety. The surgeon’s hands and instruments/tools will deliver a better-functioning nose, erase sinus infections, create a more pleasing external nose. The airway – a patient **experience** advance – has no influence on the outcome of the surgery, per se. It merely makes the immediate post-operative experience less

uncomfortable, less stressful and therefore no longer a disincentive for patients to have what they need medically or desire cosmetically.

Patients should know that:

- The airway's insertion is performed while still asleep.
- Surgeon insertion does not lengthen the time under anesthesia, but for a few minutes
- Airway is not stitched into place. It is designed to "snap into place"
- Its nesting on the floor of nose, an unoperated area, is painless.
- In-office removal is quick and with minimal discomfort since a liquid anesthetic is dribbled into the nasal interior before removal. 3-5 second removal.

- What should surgeons know about Reltok Airways?

First, and most importantly, it is for the comfort and safety of their patients. All patients want to breathe after surgery and welcome the added advantage of the airway's safety mission as the anesthesia specialist uses it as the patient emerges from anesthesia. The patented, FDA-cleared medical device, for the first time, gives the anesthesia specialist a route to quickly clear the mouth or throat of any blood or mucus that might interfere with breathing during emergence from anesthesia or in the recovery room. A significant step in reducing the risk of anesthesia complications.

"What's good for patients is all that matters", the venerable medical aphorism states. In the original case study of the first 150 patients to have the airway inserted, 98% gave it a thumbs up. Of the 150 patients, a 38-patient subset had prior unsuccessful nasal surgery, without the benefit of the airway. Some had nasal packing and some did not. 100% of those patients, perhaps the most qualified to evaluate the airway's value, endorsed the device. That says it all.

- What is the biggest difference between when Reltok is used vs. Not used.

If the airway is not employed, the anesthesiologist will be deprived of an important advance in patient safety. The FDA clearance was by its Division of Anesthesiology and thus the nasal airway is considered an anesthesia device.

If the surgeon does not place the airway into the nose after completion of the operation, the patient is denied the advantage of not only a safer emergence from anesthesia but the comfort of clear breathing after surgery, during the first one to seven or more days.

- How difficult is it for a new surgeon to start using Reltok and what are the financial benefits?

Insertion after a very short learning curve: one case. Insertion is simple and conducted **in less than 10 seconds**. Three steps:

1. Insert on the floor of the nose.
2. Press downward onto the airway to secure its position onto the nasal floor, just under the inferior turbinate.
3. Flush the airway and run the provided suction catheter to confirm absence of any obstruction of the back end of the tube within the nasopharynx.

- How long does a patient need to keep the airways in after surgery?

Surgeon decision. For some cases, one to two days is adequate. For more complex cases, some surgeons favor a five to ten day presence. That duration of the airway presence correlates with the complexity of the case, the anticipated basic healing period and whether or not the airway is needed because there is a specific period of indwelling packing or the presence of other devices that would preclude clear breathing were it not for the airway's presence.

- Does the device cause pain to the patient when inserting or removing?

Zero pain upon insertion; the insertion takes place while patient still asleep following completion of the actual surgery. Minimal but short discomfort during office removal. The insertion of liquid anesthetic prevents major discomfort. The removal takes 3-5 seconds.

- Answer any prospective questions that you have been asked or foresee being asked by patients or doctors

THAT RAISES THE ISSUE OF THE FEE PAID BY INSURERS FOR THAT EXTRA SERVICE OF AIRWAY INSERTION AND LATER REMOVAL AND WE SHOULD SPEAK ABOUT THAT.

