

New Treatment for Barrett's Esophagus Available in the Quad Cities

Written by Jake Glimco

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Minimally-Invasive Treatment for Barrett's Esophagus Now Available in the Quad-Cities

Shown Effective in Treating Pre-Cancerous Condition

QUAD-CITIES – March 15, 2011 – Quad-City area patients affected by a common pre-cancerous condition of the esophagus now have access to an effective new minimally-invasive treatment that could prevent them from developing cancer of the esophagus. HALO Radio Frequency Ablation is among a class of treatments recently cited by a leading medical group as the 'gold standard' for treating Barrett's esophagus. Gastroenterology Consultants (GI Consultants) was the first Quad Cities clinic to use the *BÂRR X Halo RF Ablation System* to treat Barrett's esophagus. GI Consultants has treated nearly 100 patients successfully as of this month, since its first treatment in September. Barrett's is a pre-cancerous condition that can result from years of chronic gastro esophageal reflux disease or GERD.

"We have had very positive results so far in the Halo treatments we have administered so far." Said Rao Movva, MD gastroenterologist and founder of GI Consultants. GI Consultants is the first Quad-Cities clinic to offer the full range of BÂRRX treatments using radio frequency ablation. Dr. Movva added, "Cancer of the esophagus is one of the only forms of cancer still on

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the rise. By destroying precancerous tissue before it turns to cancer, Halo can do for esophageal cancer what colonoscopy is doing for colon cancer, preventing cancer before it occurs.”

Just last week the American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) issued guidelines recommending the removal of precancerous cells in patients with confirmed high-grade Barrett's esophagus utilizing endoscopic eradication therapy. Such position papers set the 'gold standard' for treatment, because they are the result of extensive reviews of peer-reviewed literature, and input from not just GI physicians, but health plan representatives and consumer/patient advocates. HALO uses an endoscope to administer RF waves directly to the pre-cancerous tissue. The alternatives to RFA treatment include waiting and watching for further changes and followed by surgical removal of part of the esophagus if further signs are identified that cancer may be developing.

BÂRRX Medical President and CEO, Greg Barrett said, “We are extremely pleased the AGA Medical Position Statement confirms the usefulness of radiofrequency ablation for Barrett's patients with dysphasia. “ The AGA also says that high-risk Barrett's patients without dysphasia should also be considered for treatment. Barrett added, “These guidelines validate what has been demonstrated in over 75,000 RFA procedures and 55 peer-reviewed published papers: pre-cancerous Barrett's tissue can be safely eliminated without surgery. The AGA Medical Position Statement is a rigorously constructed publication that will assist BÂRRX and treating physicians in addressing payer policies so that RFA procedures are uniformly recognized as medically necessary services.”

The AGA's new opinion follows similar clinical practice guidelines published in 2010 by the Society of American Gastrointestinal and Endoscopic Surgeons (SAGES) addressing the management of patients with gastro esophageal reflux disease and Barrett's esophagus.

Barrett's esophagus is a precancerous condition of the lining of the esophagus caused by gastro esophageal reflux disease (GERD). Left untreated, backward flow of stomach contents such as acid and bile into the esophagus can lead to injury and chronic inflammation of the esophagus lining. A proportion of GERD patients are thus at risk of developing Barrett's esophagus, which can lead to esophageal adenocarcinoma, a lethal cancer with a five-year survival rate of approximately 15%.

Gastroenterology Consultants is affiliated with Heartland Clinic, a collaborative between Valley

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Laboratories, Valley View Anesthesia, Midwest Clinical Research and Regional Surgicenter. This family of healing partners is committed to providing the highest quality testing and care available in the Quad-City region. Learn more at www.gastroconsultantsqc.com. GI Consultants is one of the founding participants of Colon Cancer Free QCA (CCFQCA), a consortium of competing gastroenterology practices committed to increasing the awareness of colon cancer and its risks. Learn more about the initiative at www.coloncancerfreeQCA.com

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