

Would You Recommend the Sutter Radiofrequency System to Your Colleagues? – A Customer Survey

By Sutter Medizintechnik GmbH, Freiburg, Germany

In recent years all medical fields have seen the development and marketing of new and innovative approaches to treatment. For any new method both the manufacturer's promise and the surgeon's hope are usually based on the clinical benefits for patients, safety and user-friendliness. It takes more than an innovative approach or a technology for a method to become established among the wide array of treatment options. This will only happen over time, and only if the method is both clinically beneficial and well accepted by surgeons. It's the word of mouth that makes a product successful in the long run.

Introduction: Today the medical community does not only have to face more and more demanding patients, but is also embedded in an increasingly cost-conscious environment. Patients as well as health-care and reimbursement systems push for clinical benefits, like shorter recovery or down-time, and reasonable costs.

When Sutter Medizintechnik GmbH began to develop the Radiofrequency Volume Reduction (RaVoR™) system for snoring and sleep surgery applications, the main goal was to create a product that would not only help patients, but also stand the test of time. Clinical studies [1] [2] have confirmed the efficacy of the system. But are users happy and, what is more important, would they recommend the system to their fellow doctors?

Methods: A total of 145 German ENT doctors who use a Sutter radiofrequency systems were chosen for the survey and were sent a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sub-sections. They covered general information about the doctors' main clinical focus and applications, data about the radiofrequency system (e.g. type of generator used, age) and questions about their satisfaction with the system and the clinical results.

Results: The spontaneous response rate was 8.3%. The most common ENT sub-specialties among users of Sutter RaVoR™ snoring systems are: sleep medicine 92%, rhinology 83%, and allergology 67%. "Snoring surgery" is performed by 83% of the respondents. The most common procedures are shown in figure 4. Clinical results were rated on a visual analogue scale ranging from 0 (not satisfactory) to 10 (highly satisfactory). On average, the overall clinical results achieved with the system were rated at 8.5. The results for turbinates were 9.0 and for the soft palate 7.7.

Very important factors for customer satisfaction are: quality of the system, user-friendliness and the costs. In order to measure the perceived quality, two factors were applied: reliability of the system (0 = not reliable and 10 = very reliable) and stability of the accessories (0 = not stable and 10 = very stable). The Sutter system scored very well on both, with reliability being rated at 9.3 and stability of the accessories at 8.3.

Two aspects were considered to assess the

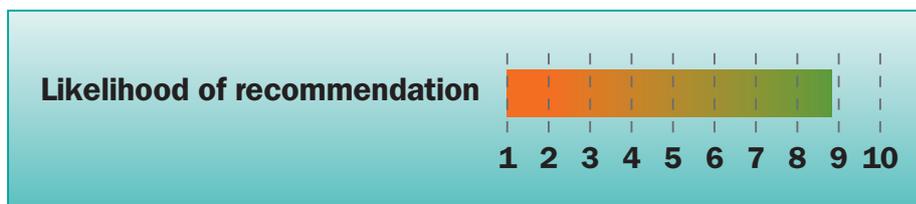


Fig. 1: Likelihood of recommendation (0 = not likely, 10 = very likely).

system's user-friendliness: handling (0 = very difficult and 10 = very easy) and duration of the procedures (0 = very long and 10 = very short). Handling was rated at 9.2 while duration of the procedures was rated at 9.0. The economic factor, i. e. operating costs, was rated at 8.4 (0 = very high operating costs and 10 = very low operating costs). The most important question to measure customer satisfaction was how likely doctors were to recommend the system to their peers. With 0 = very unlikely and 10 = very likely it was rated at 8.8. To cross-check this most important result of the survey, users were also asked to indicate how they had learned about the Sutter system. With 50% of the respondents giving "recommendation" as their first contact, the statements correlate very well.

Discussion and Conclusion: The results of the survey show a high level of customer satisfaction with the Sutter radiofrequency system. In particular the customers' readiness to recommend it emphasizes this fact. In addition to the clinical benefits, surgeons mainly appreciate its user-friendliness and the low operating costs. Except for the classic radiofrequency applications, such as RaVoR™ of the turbinates and the soft palate, the scope of radiofrequency applications has expanded to all fields of ENT. Sutter was the first to offer re-usable and autoclavable accessories with an ENT radiofrequency system. Over the years it has become a success story. Today it is the No. 1 selling system with re-usable probes.

Correspondence: Sutter Medizintechnik GmbH, Tullastrasse 87, 79108 Freiburg/Germany, Tel. +49 (0)761 51551-0, E-Mail: info@sutter-med.de

References: 1. Blumen M. B., et al. Comparative Study of four radiofrequency Generators for the Treatment of Snoring; Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (2008) 138, 294-299 2. Marinescu A. Bipolare Radiofrequenz-Volumenreduktion mit "ORL-Set" bei habituellem Rhonchus; Laryngo-Rhino-Otologie (2004) 83, 610-616



Fig. 2: Customer satisfaction rated on an analogue scale (0 = not satisfactory, 10 = highly satisfactory).

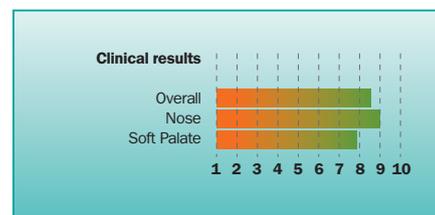


Fig. 3: Clinical results rated on a visual analogue scale (0 = not satisfactory, 10 = highly satisfactory).

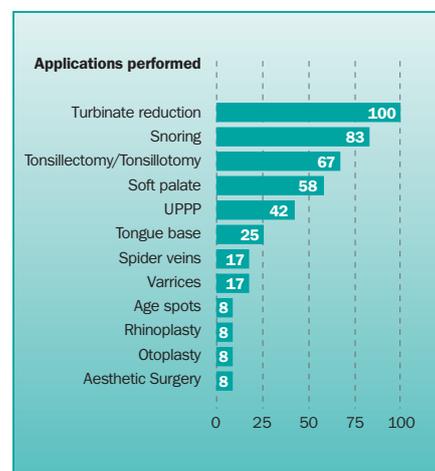


Fig. 4: Percentage of respondents using their Sutter system to perform the procedure.

Ordering Information

Featured Product



87005 – RaVoR™ sleep surgery set

Qty.	REF	Description
1	700462	Bipolar needle electrode "Binner" with protective insulation, work length 110 mm
1	700495	Bipolar needle electrode "Marinescu" for the soft palate
1	700496	Bipolar needle electrode "Marinescu" for the posterior pillars
1	700499	Bipolar needle electrode for the tongue base
1 (x2)	360328	ARROWtip™ electrode, medium angled, work length 30 mm
1 (x2)	360342	ARROWtip™ electrode, medium angled, work length 65 mm
1	701757	Instrument tray for RaVoR™ Set CURIS®
1	800000	Compact container with basic accessories



870010 – CURIS® basic set with single-use patient plates

Qty.	REF	Description
1	360100-01	CURIS® radiofrequency generator (incl. mains cord, user manual and test protocol)
1	360110	Footswitch with two pedals for CURIS® (cut & coag), 4 m cable
1	370154 L	Bipolar cable for CURIS®, length 3 m
1	360704	Monopolar handpiece (pencil) cut & coag, shaft 2.4 mm, cable 3 m
1	360236	Cable for single-use patient plates, length 4.5 m
1 (x50)	360222	Safety patient plates, single use, packing 5 x 10 pcs. (not shown)
Optional		
1*	360226	Patient plate with cable, re-usable, length 4 m



SUTTER MEDIZINTECHNIK GMBH

TULLASTRASSE 87 · 79108 FREIBURG / GERMANY · TEL. +49 (0)761 51551-0 · FAX +49 (0)761 51551-30
WWW.SUTTER-MED.COM · WWW.SUTTER-MED.DE · E-MAIL: INFO@SUTTER-MED.DE