



Stanford eCorner

Envisioning the First Balloon Catheter

Thomas Fogarty, *Fogarty Engineering*

January 27, 2003

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/759/Envisioning-the-First-Balloon-Catheter>

[Introduction by David Cassak] Tom Fogarty explains that he became interested in medicine "by accident." He discusses his early design development and how he turned a clinical problem into a device that could solve the problem: "In this situation...it was almost like a lightbulb that went off. If you put a thin catheter system down, and you can make it bigger and then withdraw it and control the volume during withdrawal, you get the clot out. Essentially, I took what they call urethral catheters, which are long, thin tubes. I cut the baby finger off a number 5 glove. I tied it on the catheter system...and that was the first balloon catheter.



click to play

Transcript

Good afternoon. My name is David Cassak from EnVivo and it's my pleasure to host this first program from the Innovators Workbench Medical Technology Innovation Series. And our guest tonight is Tom Fogarty. Over the course of the next several months, as this program plays out, it's going to be hard to resist the temptation to use the term 'legendary', but if the term applies to anybody in this industry, it's certainly Tom Fogarty. Tom, welcome and thanks for being here, for the opportunity to talk to you. I know you grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. What was your early training like and how did you get into medicine? By accident. Take us through that early--that first design development. What material did you use? How did the idea come to you? How did you actually turn that from the idea that here's the clinical problem that needs to be solved to a device that would solve that problem? Well, in this particular situation, and it doesn't really represent the most common scenario, it was almost like a light bulb went off that, you know, if you put a thin catheter system down and you could make it bigger and then withdraw it and control the volume during withdrawal, you get the clot out. Essentially, I took what they call 'urethral catheters', which are long, thin tubes, and I cut the baby finger off a Number 5 glove and I tied it on the catheter system with fly-tying techniques.

And that was the first balloon catheter.