

**DR.OZ**

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# THE GOOD LIFE

oz says...

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## Weight-loss balloons

sound kind of crazy. Are they?

**OZ:** Actually, I think there's something to them. With the Obalon three-balloon system, you swallow capsules containing balloons that inflate to the size of oranges. They take up space in your stomach, so you eat less.

Wow! How is this different from shrinking your stomach with surgery or a gastric band?

**OZ:** It's the first reversible, noninvasive method, and it's for people who have only about 30 to 70 pounds to lose. You get one balloon a month, so your body can adjust. After six months, they're removed via endoscopy under light sedation. They have few side effects, and studies show they work.

Why not just eat fewer calories and skip the balloons?

**OZ:** That's what I prefer to see people do, but this could still be a good solution for those who want to jump-start weight loss but aren't eligible for weight-loss surgery. (You usually need to be at least 100 pounds overweight for that.)

So will you be less hungry?

**OZ:** No, but you don't have as much room in your stomach, so you naturally eat less.

OK, but how well?

**OZ:** It's not a home run, but it isn't a fizzle: People lost nearly 7% of their body weight (15 pounds on average), but you can lose more if you eat fewer calories.

Can you feel the balloons inside your body?

**OZ:** I checked with Christine Ren-Fielding, a bariatric surgeon at NYU Langone Medical Center, whose patients have tried these. She said that after a while, you can't tell they're there, but they take getting used to. You get medications to control any nausea and spasms for the first three days.

It's not cheap!

**OZ:** True! It can run \$6,000 to \$9,000, and insurance doesn't cover it. That's a lot, but it might be worth it if weight is causing health problems and nothing else works. Hopefully, the price will fall.



## DOES RUBBING ALCOHOL SANITIZE EVERYTHING?

**OZ SAYS**  
Not necessarily.

Say you drop your nail clippers in the toilet. (Not like this has happened to me or anything.) Soaking them for a few minutes in alcohol would nix many of the microbes they picked up in there but not all of them, says Timothy Hoover, Ph.D., head of the Department of Microbiology at the University of Georgia. Rubbing alcohol kills fungi and viruses but not bacterial spores. (In scientist speak, that means it disinfects them but doesn't sanitize them.) So what will make them really clean again?



### boil them

Put the dropped items in a pot, cover them with water, and boil for a few minutes. If something got dirty that can't take the heat but can withstand some chemical contact, very diluted bleach—1 teaspoon of bleach in a half-gallon of water—can do the total-cleanup trick.