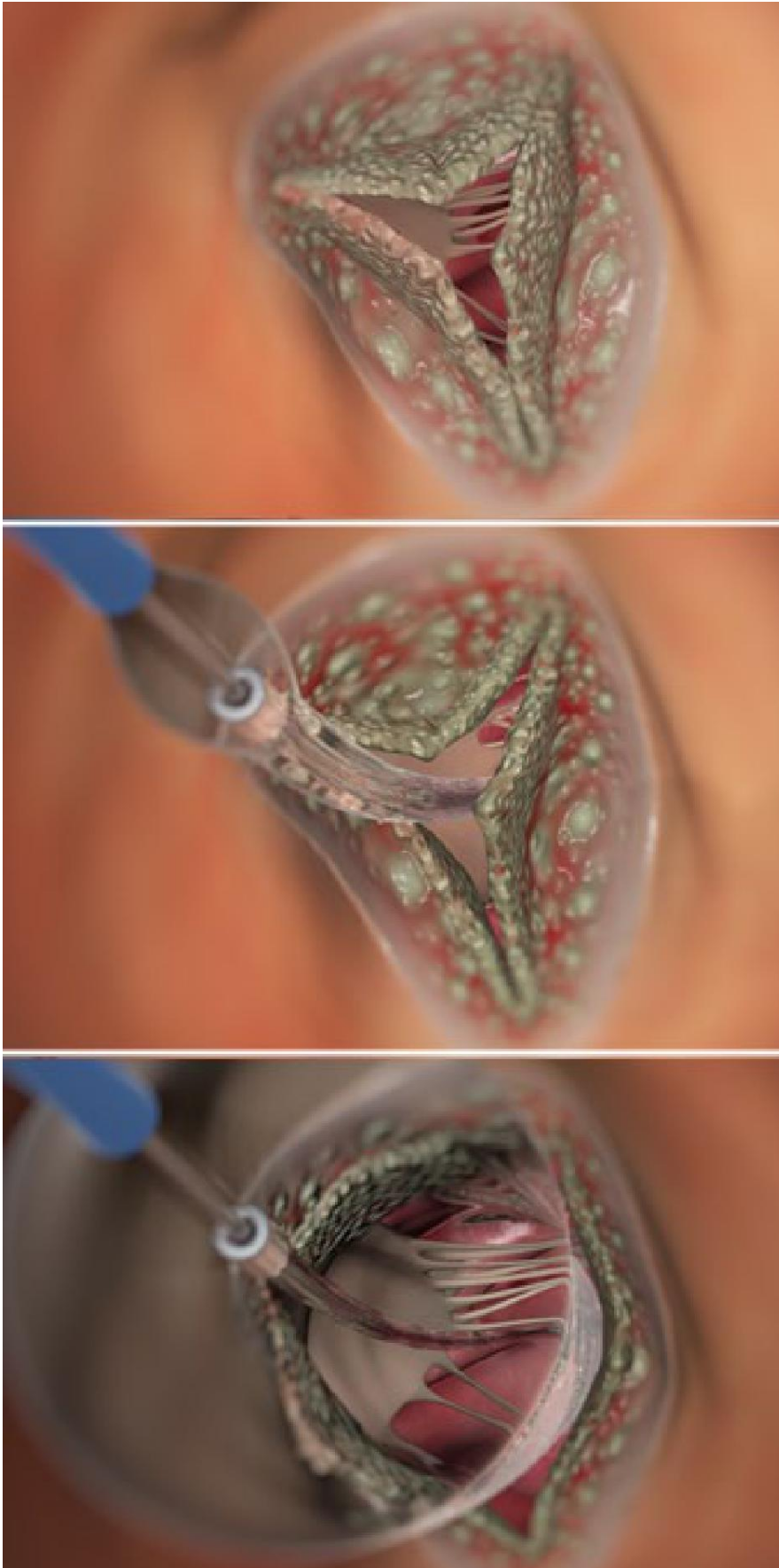




Balloon Valvuloplasty



Overview

This procedure treats a condition called "stenosis." That's when a valve in your heart is narrower than it should be. The valve's flaps, called "leaflets," may be stiff or fused. Balloon valvuloplasty widens the valve so blood can flow through your heart normally.

Preparation

To begin, you're anesthetized. A soft, thin tube called a "balloon catheter" is put into a large blood vessel in your leg. With the help of an imaging device, your doctor guides the balloon catheter up through your body. It is pushed into your heart and to the narrowed valve.

Widening the valve

The doctor inflates the catheter's balloon to open the valve. If the valve's leaflets are fused, the balloon separates them. This improves blood flow through your heart. Finally, the balloon is deflated and removed.

End of procedure

After the procedure, you'll be closely watched in a recovery room. Your healthcare provider will tell you when it's safe to go home. You'll need to have followup visits with your doctor to make sure your heart is working properly.