Breathing Problems (Mouth Breathing)

Do you find it hard to breathe clearly through your nose? Are you breathing through your mouth more often than you'd like, or experiencing noisy breathing during the day or at night? These symptoms are common and can have a significant effect on your energy levels, sleep quality, and overall wellbeing.

At Birmingham Head and Neck Clinic, we provide expert diagnosis and treatment for adults with nasal obstruction, noisy breathing, or persistent mouth breathing. Our team of ENT consultants are here to help you breathe more freely and improve your quality of life.

What Causes Breathing Problems?

Breathing difficulties in adults often stem from structural or inflammatory issues in the nose, sinuses, or upper airway. Common causes include:

- **Deviated nasal septum** – where the cartilage dividing the nasal passages is off-centre
- **Nasal polyps** – soft growths inside the nose that can block airflow
- **Chronic rhinitis or sinusitis** – inflammation of the nasal lining or sinuses
- **Enlarged turbinates** – swelling of the bony structures inside the nose
- **Nasal valve collapse** – when the outer part of the nostril narrows or collapses with breathing
- **Obstruction in the throat or upper airway**
- **Post-nasal drip or allergy-related inflammation**

These issues may lead to nasal blockage, snoring, noisy breathing, or an increased tendency to breathe through your mouth, especially when sleeping.

Symptoms You Might Notice

Breathing problems can present in different ways, and you may experience:

- Difficulty breathing through your nose
- Noisy breathing, wheezing, or whistling sounds when breathing
- Mouth breathing, especially at night or upon waking
- Poor sleep quality or frequent waking
- Dry mouth or sore throat on waking
- Feeling congested without a cold
- Reduced sense of smell

If breathing through your nose feels consistently difficult, or you rely on your mouth for breathing, it's time to seek specialist support.

When To Seek Help

You should book an assessment with an ENT specialist if:

- You regularly struggle with nasal breathing
- You experience persistent noisy breathing or snoring
- You rely on mouth breathing day or night
- You feel your breathing affects your sleep or energy levels
- You have frequent sinus infections or congestion
- You notice a change in your breathing pattern that isn't improving

Getting the right diagnosis early can prevent complications and improve your comfort and wellbeing.

How We Assess Breathing Issues

At Birmingham Head and Neck Clinic, your consultation will include a full assessment by an experienced ENT consultant. This may involve:

- A thorough review of your symptoms and lifestyle
- Examination of your nose, throat, and upper airway
- **Nasal endoscopy** – a painless, in-clinic camera test to examine the inside of your nasal passages and airway
- Allergy assessment or review of medical history
- Imaging (such as CT scan) if further detail is needed
- Referral for sleep studies if obstructive sleep apnoea is suspected

Treatment Options

We offer a full range of treatments to address breathing difficulties, tailored to your specific cause. These may include:

- **Nasal sprays or antihistamines** for inflammation or allergies
- **Saline rinses** to clear nasal passages
- **Septoplasty** to straighten a deviated nasal septum
- **Turbinate reduction** to reduce internal nasal swelling
- **Nasal valve surgery** for structural collapse or weakness
- **Polyp removal** for blocked nasal passages
- **Endoscopic sinus surgery** for chronic sinusitis
- **Referral for sleep apnoea management**, including CPAP or oral appliances

We'll explain all your options clearly and support you in choosing the most effective path forward.

What To Expect At Your Appointment

When you visit Birmingham Head and Neck Clinic, you'll receive care from a specialist who listens to your concerns and takes the time to understand your symptoms. We'll carry out a thorough examination, discuss the most likely causes, and work with you to create a personalised treatment plan.

Our goal is to help you breathe better – day and night – and feel more rested, focused, and energised.

Get In Touch

Breathing should feel natural and effortless. If you're living with blocked, noisy, or uncomfortable breathing, we're here to help.

Contact Birmingham Head and Neck Clinic today to book your consultation with an expert ENT specialist.