

Airway Obstruction

A child's airway may be partially obstructed, as evidenced by mouthbreathing, snoring, tooth grinding, bedwetting, allergies or frequent ear or other ENT infections.

Breathing is primary. When obstruction is present, the body adapts muscle positions to create as much airway space as possible. If muscle positions are not normal, then bones grow abnormally.

Airway obstruction also leads to poor esthetics- lessened attractiveness, poor self-image lessened self confidence, postural changes & dysfunction.

look at what a child's airway obstruction can cause:

- open mouth posture
- mouthbreathing and abnormal forward head posture
- decreased oxygen to the developing brain:
- diminished ability to think and learn
- diminished school performance
- heart enlargement
- impaired immune response (due to less nasal filtering & warming)
- more allergies
- frequent ENT and lung infections with post-nasal drip
- reduced ability to hear- hearing deficiencies
- the need for ear tubes
- frequent stuffiness and runny nose
- frequent prescriptions for antihistamines,
- decongestants, other respiratory medications
- chronic fungal sinusitis.
- tonsil inflammation, enlargement and infection
- adenoid inflammation, enlargement and infection
- low, forward tongue position
- inadequate development of the elevator muscles of the tongue and soft palate
- speech deficiencies throughout life
- narrow maxilla and crossbite
- abnormal tooth positions
- smaller than normal development of the nasal passages
- snoring and episodes of sleep apnea
- halitosis
- tooth grinding
- adverse neuromuscular balance
- bedwetting (due to poor sleep, then very deep, sleep)
- vertical growth of the head and face
- long face with decreased attractiveness
- skeletal and dental openbite

- functional problems, including neuromuscular disorders.
- class ii dental growth- protrusive incisors at high
- risk for traumatic injuries
- forward growth (underbite growth)
- too-narrow upper jaw (maxilla) and crossbite
- asymmetric face

Thumbsucking, pacifiers, sippy cups and baby bottles cause many of these same health problems because, during sucking, the tongue is held in the low forward position, with resulting:

- narrow upper jaw (maxilla) and crossbite
- blockage of the eustachian tubes
- tooth grinding
- chronic middle ear infections
- tonsil inflammation, enlargement and infections
- adenoid inflammation, enlargement and infections

and risk of any or all of the above health problems, extending throughout life.

We will evaluate the child's

- tongue position
- posture
- habits
- mouthbreathing
- toothgrinding
- snoring
- allergies
- bedwetting

What can you do?

If recommended, or if you are concerned, get an **ent** consult with a specialist (otolaryngologist).

Eliminate habits - **we can help!**

Treat a narrow maxilla with expansion appliances.

Treat skeletal problems with craniofacial orthopedic treatment.