



## BRACHYCEPHALIC SYNDROME

### ABOUT THE DISEASE

Brachycephalic describes dog breeds with short, flat faces. Examples include the French Bulldog, Pug, English Bulldog, Boston Terrier, and Shih Tzu. These breeds often have body features that cause health problems.

**Brachycephalic Obstructive Airway Syndrome (BOAS)**, happens when extra tissue in the back of the mouth and throat blocks the airway. This makes it hard for the dog to breathe. Owners may hear loud snoring or snorting sounds when the dog breathes.

BOAS affects more than breathing as it also increases the risk of heat stroke, problems during anesthetic recovery, and eye issues.

### OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

Veterinarians often make a preliminary diagnosis of BOAS based on the dog's breed, medical history, and a physical examination.

For a confirmed diagnosis, they identify one or more of these body features:

- Narrowed nostrils, called stenotic nares.
- A soft palate that is too long, called an elongated soft palate.
- An enlarged tongue, called macroglossia.
- A windpipe that is too narrow, called tracheal stenosis or hypoplastic trachea.
- Turned-out pouches in the voice box area, called everted laryngeal sacculles.

### TREATMENT

Surgery is often needed to remove extra tissue and open the dog's airway. The procedures depend on the specific body issues found.

Common surgeries include:

- Rhinoplasty or nostril resection: This widens the nostrils.
- Staphylectomy: This shortens the soft palate.
- Laryngeal saccullectomy: This removes turned-out pouches in the voice box area.

During sudden breathing emergencies, dogs may need hospital care with oxygen therapy, sedatives, and anti-inflammatory medicines. In severe cases, they might require a breathing tube (called intubation) and a ventilator to help them breathe.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Weight management is **CRITICAL** in these patients. Obesity can significantly worsen clinical signs associated with BOAS.
- Reduce time spent outside in warm and humid weather.
- Try to minimize stressful situations or provide appropriate sedatives when necessary.