

Nasal Obturator: Care Guide

Information for patients



You have been fitted with a bespoke nasal obturator to help reduce the nasality features in your speech. The nasal obturator should only be worn at times when a reduction in nasality features is important.

How do I insert and remove my nasal obturator?

You will be instructed on how to insert and remove your nasal obturator at your fitting appointment. We will practice this process during the appointment.

Your nasal obturator can be inserted into the nostrils using fingertips and gentle pressure; using a small amount of Vaseline can help. Take care not to use too much Vaseline as this will reduce the obturator's ability to stay in the nostrils when breathing out.

Only insert the obturator into the nostril opening, do not try to push it further up into the nasal cavity. Your nasal obturator will be labelled L for left and R for right; the letter will always be positioned towards the centre of the nose which will help you orient them front and back.

To remove, simply pull the joining bar. It should not be difficult or painful to insert or remove your nasal obturator. Please contact the Restorative Department at the Leeds Dental Institute if you require assistance.

How and when do I clean my nasal obturator?

Your nasal obturator is made of silicone and can be easily cleaned using liquid hand soap and either warm or cold water.

Clean your nasal obturator every time you remove it and always dry thoroughly before wearing or storing it.

Do not use chemicals, hot or boiling water, or abrasives to clean your nasal obturator as it will damage the silicone. The fit of your obturator is not affected by temperature however the material may degrade with high temperatures.

How do I store my nasal obturator?

After cleaning your nasal obturator, dry it fully and store it in a small pot or box. Do not store it when wet or damp as this can encourage bacteria to grow. Avoid contact with any heat sources, for example radiators or direct sunlight, as this will damage the silicone.

My breathing feels different

Airflow through your nose will be reduced when wearing your nasal obturator; this is needed to reduce the nasality features in your speech. You will still be able to breathe in and out. When wearing the nasal obturator for longer periods of time, natural nasal secretions of the nose can block the holes in the top of the nasal obturator. If you cannot breathe in and out it is likely the obturator is blocked and requires cleaning (see above). You may also notice your mouth feeling drier; this is normal during the first few weeks of wear but can be improved by more frequent cleaning of the obturator.

If your breathing feels continually uncomfortable when wearing the nasal obturator, please contact the Restorative Department at the Leeds Dental Institute.

My nasal obturator is uncomfortable

The comfort and fit of your nasal obturator will be checked at the fitting appointment. Some discomfort may occur for the first few days of wear as you adapt to wearing it. Persistent or severe discomfort may occur in some cases. If you are finding your obturator uncomfortable, then please contact the Restorative Department at the Leeds Dental Institute.

My nasal obturator is damaged or separated

Nasal obturators are made from a soft silicone material. This degrades over time, most commonly resulting in colour change.

The condition of your nasal obturator will be checked at review appointments, and you will be offered a replacement if it is discoloured. If your nasal obturator is damaged or the two nostril 'plugs' become separated, then **you must stop wearing the obturator and contact the Restorative Department at the Leeds Dental Institute.**

What should I do if I have a problem?

Allergic reactions are very rare. If, however, you notice any irritation such as redness or a rash from wearing the nasal obturator stop wearing it immediately and let the Restorative Dentist know. Contact your GP if necessary.

Your nasal obturator sits in your nostrils. While every effort has been made to reduce the risk of inhalation of the devices and ensure your nasal obturator is safe, you must remain vigilant.

IMPORTANT: If your nasal obturator moves further up into the nasal cavity and you cannot remove it, or you think it has been inhaled further, you will need to **attend your nearest Emergency Department (A&E) immediately.**

The likelihood of this occurring is very rare as the two nostril 'plugs' are connected by a joining bar. It is only likely to occur if the obturator breaks and you continue to wear the one or two plugs separately. Please remember to stop wearing your nasal obturator if it becomes separated and contact the Restorative Department at the Leeds Dental Institute as soon as possible.

Contact details

For questions or concerns with the nasal obturator please contact the Restorative Dentist on:

Tel: 0113 343 1729

For questions or concerns about speech please contact the Specialist Speech and Language Therapist on:

Tel: 0113 392 3786 or email leedsth-tr.cleftslt@nhs.net



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