

## Information for Patients

Surgery to help you stop snoring is a procedure that should only be carried out when specific criteria are met. This is because the medical evidence tells us that the intervention can sometimes do more harm than good and there are alternative treatments which are usually far more effective.

### About the condition

Snoring is a noise that occurs during sleep that can be caused by vibration of tissues of the throat and palate. It is very common and as many as one in four adults snore.

As long as it is not complicated by periods of apnoea (temporarily stopping breathing) it is not usually harmful to health, but can be disruptive, especially to a person's partner.

It's important you and your doctor make a shared decision about what's best for you if your snoring is becoming a problem. When deciding what's best you should both consider the benefits, the risks, the alternatives and what will happen if you do nothing.

### What are the **BENEFITS** of the intervention?

Surgery for snoring in patients without Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA) has been shown to have limited to no long term clinical effectiveness.

### What are the **RISKS** of the intervention?

Surgery carries a small risk of severe complications including bleeding, airway compromise and in rare cases death. There is also evidence that the majority of patients suffer persistent side effects including: swallowing problems, voice change, globus (a persistent sensation of having a lump in the back of your mouth), taste disturbance and nasal regurgitation.

### What are the **ALTERNATIVES**?

There are a number of alternatives to surgery that can improve the symptom of snoring. These include, losing weight, stopping smoking, cutting down on alcohol, medical treatments for a blocked nose or mouth splints which can help to move your jaw forward when you are sleeping.

### What if you do **NOTHING**?

Doing nothing is not likely to be harmful. Snoring is a common condition and can be frustrating for both the patient and partner. It is recommended a clinician rules out reversible causes and Obstructive Sleep Apnoea. The alternatives suggested above may help and far outweigh the benefits of any surgical intervention.

You can find out more about the [NHS Evidence Based Interventions](#) programme online.