

# The breathing clinic

**This leaflet explains more about the breathing clinic. If you have any questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for your child.**

## What is breathing pattern disorder (BPD)?

BPD is when a change in the way that you breathe causes symptoms that affect your quality of life. BPD is common in children with asthma.

The symptoms can happen all the time, or they might come and go. In BPD there can be:

- changes to the way the chest moves to get air in and out
- changes to the speed at which you breathe
- loss of the regular, controlled rhythm of breaths

Symptoms of BPD include:

- shortness of breath
- chest pain
- chest tightness
- difficulty exercising
- tiredness
- regular yawning or sighing

Symptoms are different for everyone. Some people get symptoms when they exercise, others get them when they are resting. Because the symptoms are similar to those of asthma, it can be difficult to know whether asthma or BPD are causing them. Symptoms of both conditions can happen together, which can make it even harder to tell them apart.

Some things can make the BPD worse, or trigger it. Your child might have other triggers, but common ones include:

- problems breathing through your nose
- reflux
- anxiety or stress
- poor asthma control
- a cold
- a sinus problem

There are other conditions that can happen together with BPD, including:

- asthma
- chronic (long-term) respiratory conditions
- chronic cough
- throat-clearing
- inducible laryngeal obstruction (ILO)

We don't always know why someone gets BPD, and this can be frustrating

## Who can use the breathing clinic

If your child has been told by their respiratory consultant that they have a breathing pattern disorder, your child might be invited to come to our breathing clinic. The clinic is for children and young people who are under the care of a respiratory consultant, and whose breathing problems are affecting their daily life. The clinic is managed by our physiotherapy and psychology teams.

Between appointments your child will need to practice exercises and strategies to help manage the condition. **Please note, by coming to the clinic you are agreeing to make sure the tasks are completed between appointments.**

Before coming to the clinic, your child will need to have had a nurse and a pharmacy review. This will be arranged by your child's respiratory consultant before they refer your child to our clinic. If you have any questions about this, please contact our team. ....

## What happens at the clinic

At your first appointment you will meet a physiotherapist and a clinical psychologist. They will ask you about what is feeling difficult, and may ask questions about your family history as well as about your child's development and education.

A personalised therapy programme will be provided for you based on our assessment. This may include:

- education
- breathing re-training
- posture and strength exercises
- relaxation exercises
- worry- or stress-management skills

It is important that other conditions are also fully treated or managed, including asthma management, reflux medicines and nasal clearance.

### Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's breathing clinic appointment, please contact the respiratory service, **phone** 020 7188 7188 extension 58203, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

For more information on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web:** [www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets)

### Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm  
**email** [letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk](mailto:letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk)



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