

# 'Noisy breathing in flat-faced (brachycephalic) dogs at rest or light exercise is never normal'

Dogs with an abnormally flattened face are described as brachycephalic. Many serious health conditions, including breathing difficulties, are linked to flat-faced dogs. Sadly these conditions are often considered normal for these flat-faced breeds despite being recognised as a disease for dogs overall.

The position of the **International Collaborative on Extreme Conformations in Dogs (ICECDogs)** is that flat-faced dogs that show noisy breathing (awake-snoring or raspy breathing) at rest or light exercise **are suffering** from severe respiratory problems and should **NEVER BE CONSIDERED AS NORMAL or HEALTHY**

## What is BOAS?

Brachycephalic obstructive airway syndrome describes the severe respiratory problems linked to being flat-faced where affected dogs struggle to breathe, exercise, sleep or enjoy a good quality of life

brachycephalic face shape

normal face shape



**Anyone wishing to avoid acquiring a sick dog is:**

Encouraged to **never to acquire a brachycephalic (flat-faced dog) with noisy breathing.**

Flat-faced breeds that commonly suffer from BOAS include **French Bulldogs** (~50% affected), **Pugs** (~60% affected) and **English Bulldogs** (~40% affected)

The ICECDogs advice to the general public:

**'Stop and think before acquiring a dog with an extreme conformation'.**

**If you already own a flat-faced dog, be aware that:**

**Flat-faced dogs with noisy breathing at rest or light exercise are suffering.**

**Never accept noisy or laboured breathing at rest or light exercise as normal or healthy.**

**Breathing problems in flat-faced dogs generally become worse with age.**

**Always keep your flat-faced dog slim.**

**Arrange regular veterinary health examinations of your dog. Ask your vet about grading your dog for respiratory function to assess the severity of breathing problems.**

**To reduce the risk of heatstroke, keep your dog cool on warm/hot days.**

**Exercise is the most common cause of heatstroke in dogs so avoid over-exercising flat-faced dogs in warm/hot weather.**

## Take-home message:

**Flat-faced dogs with noisy breathing at rest or light exercise are suffering and should never be described as healthy dogs if promoted, bred from, sold, shown or rehomed.**

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