

## Preface

# Nasal Airway Evaluation

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Nasal airway obstruction is a frequent complaint of patients from both facial plastic and rhinology clinics. In most cases establishing the cause or causes for this complaint is relatively straightforward, not infrequently the etiology of this symptom is a challenge, as the symptoms of nasal obstruction may not always match the clinical examination.

It is, therefore, crucial that the facial plastic surgeon is able to adequately evaluate the nasal airway to properly address nasal airway obstruction. Several methods are available for functional evaluation of the nasal airway, each one analyzing nasal breathing from a different perspective. These distinct methods do not overlap each other; instead data produced by any specific method will complement data obtained by other methods. Nasal airflow level may be determined, as may its velocity or the different paths of the nasal airstream inside the nasal cavity. The resistance of the nasal airway to the airflow may be measured, as may the temperature or the pressure inside the nasal cavity. The dimensions and angles of the nasal

cavity may be analyzed, as may the geometry of the nasal airway. And, rather importantly, nasal breathing sensation may be quantified, as may the impairment caused by nasal obstruction on routine daily activities of the patient.

Only after an adequate assessment of the nasal airway can the facial plastic surgeon establish a treatment plan to correctly address each individual case of nasal airway obstruction.

This issue of *Facial Plastic Surgery* is intended to provide an overview of the diverse methods currently available for analyzing the nasal airway and nasal breathing, to provide the state-of-the-art knowledge for selecting the evaluation method or combination of methods that afford the most relevant information in each clinical scenario, and to provide critical judgment of data produced by each method of nasal airway evaluation.



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