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ORAL APPLIANCES FOR SNORING AND SLEEP APNEA

Over forty million Americans snore, 45% of all adults, 25% habitually. Men outnumber women by five to one and as their partners will tell you, snoring is not a laughing matter. 4% of men and 2% of women suffer from sleep apnea.

What causes all this noise? Snoring is caused when a person's airway is constricted forcing air to be inhaled at increased velocity and pressure. Various obstructions, such as relaxed tongue, soft palate, uvula and pharyngeal tissue, tend to collapse against each other during sleep, creating vibrations. As a person ages and perhaps gains a little weight the problem intensifies.

Occasionally the airway closes completely and there will be an interruption of breathing during sleep. This is called obstructive sleep apnea and may occur dozens of times per hour, lasting as long as 30 seconds. It is characterized by sudden loud gasps, chronic daytime drowsiness, cardio-pulmonary effects, and yes, snoring. Not everyone who snores suffers from sleep apnea, but the majority of persons with sleep apnea snore.

Sever snoring and suspected obstructive sleep apneas should be evaluated at a sleep disorder center, such as the sleep labs at Good Samaritan and Nyack Hospitals, where I am on active staff. At these centers, sleep patterns and their physiologic effects on you are monitored.

The mild to moderated snorer, and/or apneic person, however, can be helped by new and revolutionary oral appliances that have been well researched and proven medically to be effective. They are worn at night and fit over the upper teeth similar to an athletic mouthguard, while the bottom part engages the lower teeth and holds the jaw in a forward position- the first step done in CPR to open the airway. They can be simple appliances, constructed in one sitting in the office using thermoplastics, or more complex appliances requiring impressions and laboratory construction. These more sophisticated devices can actually be titrated and adjusted to find the most beneficial positions. 95% of patients fitted with these appliances have had considerable success using them, reporting an average of 79% reduction in snoring and sometimes complete elimination. There is usually significant reduction in sleep apnea as well.

If you would like to discuss these appliances or have one made, please call Dr. Chernick. We welcome you to visit our web-site www.snoresolutions.net as well as related sites such as www.Dentalsleepmed.org, www.somnomed.com, www.amisleep.com, and www.sleepapneadentist.com.