

FAQ

Is Snoring Normal?

Millions of Americans snore. Snoring does have a negative affect on the quality of your sleep. The American Medical Association has stated that people who snore have 3 times as many motor vehicle accidents as non-snorers. Perhaps this is because the noise and vibration of the snoring actually interferes with the normal sleep pattern.

Do Men Snore More than Women?

While snoring is more common in men than women, the disparity lessens after menopause. Additionally, 30% of all pregnant women snore and there are associations between delivering developmentally retarded babies and snoring.

Is It Normal for Children to Snore?

It is not normal for children to snore. Children who snore may need to see an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist. Children over 7 years of age should have a consultation with an Orthodontist who has been trained in dental sleep medicine.

What Causes Snoring?

When we sleep, the tongue and all the soft tissues in the back of the throat relax. As air is breathed in, these relaxed tissues vibrate and cause the noise we know as snoring. Snoring is sometimes so loud that it can reach a threshold that would require hearing protection if a similar noise occurred in the workplace.

Other Than the Noise, Does Snoring Pose a Health Risk?

Snoring can be compared to a smoke alarm. When the smoke alarm goes off, it signals us to check for a fire. The “snoring alarm” may signal that there is a serious life shortening and life threatening underlying condition called Obstructive Sleep Apnea.

What is Obstructive Sleep Apnea?

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (“OSA”) is a condition where the tongue and soft tissues in the back of the throat collapse during sleep and actually block the airway. This can cause choking or intermittent suffocation during sleep. During these episodes, when the airway is blocked, the body is deprived of oxygen and heart rate increases. Bed partners may report these types of occurrences as “gasping for breath.” These suffocating episodes can occur hundreds of times during a typical night’s sleep. Over time, Obstructive Sleep Apnea can lead to high blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, heart attack, strokes and even death.

I Have Seen My Spouse Stop Breathing. Is this Normal to Some Extent?

This is NOT normal!! Gasping for breath or stopping breathing during sleep is a symptom

of Obstructive Sleep Apnea. This is a serious problem and requires medical attention.

Can My Snoring or Sleep Apnea Be Treated with a Dental Device?

Yes! Research has shown and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that custom made dental devices can be used to treat snoring, for mild and moderate sleep apnea and for those patients who cannot tolerate a CPAP machine.

Do All Dentists Make These Devices?

Only a limited number of dentists have the special training required to properly make custom dental devices for snoring and sleep apnea. Dr. Beasley has special training in this area of practice.

What About the Dental Devices I have seen on TV or in Magazines?

These are “boil and bite” devices, which are soaked in hot water and then adapted to your teeth. Medical research has shown that these devices are ineffective at treating sleep apnea and the FDA does not approve them. Using these devices can also cause your teeth to shift.

Does My Weight Affect My Snoring and Sleep Apnea?

We know that weight and larger neck sizes make you more prone to these problems. The severity of the problem can often increase with weight gain. While not a cure, weight loss may help the same conditions to improve.

Why Does This Affect Some People and Not Others?

We are all different. Sometimes we are just born with a tendency to this problem. We do know that alcohol and some medications can make snoring and sleep apnea worse.

My Doctor Recommended a CPAP, but I Can't Wear It. What Can I Do?

We have many patients that cannot tolerate a CPAP machine and love their custom made dental devices. In 2009, the American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommended that patients with sleep apnea be active participants in the decision on the type of treatment they receive for their sleep apnea. We welcome the opportunity to discuss your treatment options at a complimentary initial visit.

Does My Medical Insurance Cover This?

Most medical insurance companies cover this therapy. We are happy to do a complimentary benefits check for you after one of our doctors determines that you are a candidate for oral appliance therapy.