

## Do I have Sleep Apnea?



Almost everyone snores occasionally. Snoring affects around 80% of men and 20% of women over 40 worldwide. While some snoring can be harmless, snoring can be a symptom of Sleep Apnea.

Snoring usually occurs when the airway at the back of the throat constricts, causing air to be inhaled at an increased speed and pressure. During sleep, our bottom jaw and tongue falls back to the rear of the throat. This along with the soft tissue (tonsils, soft palate and uvula) vibrate, which creates the anti-social and debilitating sound of snoring.

Signs of Sleep Apnea:

- Choking or stopping breathing during sleep.
- Excessive day time sleepiness, irresistible urges to nap.
- Morning headaches.
- Limbs jerking during sleep.
- Waking up tired or thirsty.
- Snoring.
- Irritability.
- Poor memory
- Long pauses in breathing while sleeping.

There are a number of options for rectifying sleep apnea depending upon the severity of the problem. In more severe cases, two options include nasal surgery through increasing the diameter of the nasal passage by removing the tissue to assist airflow and throat surgery via the removal of tissue including reducing the uvula. Another option is a CPAP machine. This consists of a pressurized mask forcing a continuous air flow into the nose and mouth. Unfortunately, this option is bulky, noisy, expensive and constrictive.

Your final option for the treatment of sleep apnea is a special dental mouth guard. This mouth guard is specifically tailored to your mouth. It prevents the tongue and jaw from dropping back into the airway and blocking it at night causing snoring while allowing the lower jaw to have natural movement during sleep. This simple device allows the upper airways to remain open and permits you to breathe more easily and naturally while sleeping.

Make sure you consult your dental professional before going forward with any treatment option.

## Healthy Tips



With Easter and Passover coming soon, many food gifts will be sent through the mail. To make sure you or your gift recipients are not candidates for food poisoning, heed these tips: Inform people that they will be receiving a gift in the mail that needs to be refrigerated; make sure food gifts arrive cold or frozen solid if that's what the food requires; don't accept mushy frozen products or warm meats that are supposed to arrive cold; send gifts prepared in your own kitchen by overnight mail and packed with frozen gel or dry ice or sealed in Styrofoam; always mark "keep refrigerated" on packages containing perishable food.