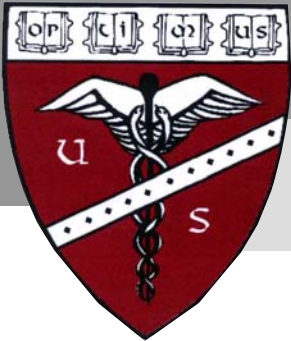


Snoring



University Services

Snoring

Snoring is noisy breathing during sleep that may occur nightly or intermittently. Persons most at risk are those who are overweight and males, however snoring is a problem of both genders causing disruptions to your own sleep and your bed-partner's sleep. It can lead to fragmented and un-refreshing sleep which translates into poor daytime function (tiredness and sleepiness) and usually worsens with age. In contrast to Sleep Apnea, simple snoring does not seem to be associated with cardiovascular problems, (hypertension, strokes, heart attacks) however it is still being researched.

Snoring affects 90 million American adults — 37 million on a regular basis.

What Causes Snoring?

- Obesity, in particular having a lot of fatty tissue around the neck
- The normal aging process leads to the relaxation of the throat muscles
- Abnormalities such as enlarged tonsils or adenoids, nasal polyps, or deviated nasal septum cause exaggerated narrowing of the throat
- Inflammation of the nose and/or throat from a respiratory infection or allergies
- Sleep position, such as sleeping on your back, may lead to snoring in some people
- Drinking alcohol close to bed time

Talk About Your Sleep With Your Health Care Professional

What is that noise?

Snoring starts when the muscles of your throat relax, your tongue falls backward, and your throat becomes narrow and "floppy." As you breathe, the walls of the throat begin to vibrate—generally when you breathe in, but also, to a lesser extent, when you breathe out. These vibrations lead to the characteristic sound of snoring. The narrower your airway becomes, the greater the vibration and the louder your snoring.

Snoring and Sleep Apnea

People who snore make a vibrating, rattling, noisy sound while breathing during sleep. Were it not for its major effect on bed partners, most snorers might blissfully ignore it. It may be a symptom of Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA). This occurs when the tongue and soft palate collapse onto the back of the throat and completely block the airway, which restricts the flow of oxygen. During apnea, blood oxygen is reduced to the entire body, sometimes producing serious irregular heart beats and significantly reduced oxygen to the brain.

Difficulties that can result from apnea include: decreased ability to concentrate, fatigue and/or loss of energy, mild to marked depression, morning headaches, forgetfulness, anxiety or decreased interest in sexual activity

Sleep Apnea and Blood Pressure

If you have apnea, your blood pressure tends to go up because when you're not breathing, the oxygen level in your body falls. This alerts the brain to send signals through the nervous system to the blood vessels to increase the flow of oxygen to the heart and the brain. The problem is that the patterns that go on at night tend to carry over in the daytime, even when the sleep apnea patient is awake and breathing normally.

Treatment of OSA

LIFESTYLE CHANGES, such as good sleep hygiene, exercise and weight loss. Snoring and sleep apnea are associated with elevated blood pressure. If apnea occurs it could be causing the amount of oxygen in the blood to go down

CPAP- Therapy delivered through a Continuous Positive Air Pressure machine. CPAP is usually applied through a tube to a mask that covers the nose. The air pressure that is generated splints the structures in the back of the throat, holding the airway open during sleep. This can also reduced the cardio vascular consequences of sleep apnea. CPAP not only lowers blood pressure at night for its user, but also during the day.

SURGERY to the soft palate, uvula, and tongue to eliminate the tissue that collapses during sleep. There are many different types of surgery generally on the back of the throat and roof of the mouth, or the nose if applicable

ORAL APPLIANCES that treat snoring and obstructive sleep apnea are small plastic devices that are worn in the mouth, similar to orthodontic retainers or sports mouth guards. There are approximately 70 types.



University Services Sleep/Waking Disorders Center

10551 Decatur Rd, Suite 200
Philadelphia, PA 19154

Phone: 215-637-6800
Fax: 215-637-6984
www.userservices.com