

SNORING AND SLEEP APNEA INCREASES RISK OF CANCER

Snoring occurs when the patients tongue partially blocks their airway usually when the patient sleeps on their back. More than 50% of males over 50 snore and it can have a negative effect on relationships with their bed partners. Many women after menopause also snore and have sleep apnea. Many couples are sleeping in separate bedrooms when the snoring is too loud.

Sleep apnea is a serious medical disorder which often occurs with snoring. Research has shown that patients with



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sleep apnea are extremely tired during the daytime and are predisposed to high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes, atrial fibrillation, congestive heart failure, acid reflux, Type 2 Diabetes, dementia and Alzheimer's.



If you snore and are very tired during the daytime there is a strong possibility that you may have sleep apnea. The diagnosis of sleep apnea can only be made by a Board Certified sleep specialist after the patient has had a sleep study in a hospital or private sleep clinic.

Sleep apnea occurs when the tongue completely blocks the airway for 10 seconds or more sometimes hundreds of times each night. When the airway is blocked the patient is deprived of oxygen and wakes up many times during the night gasping for breath. Other side effects of sleep apnea include depression, morning headaches, impotence, lack of energy and memory loss.

If you have any of the above mentioned medical conditions or symptoms I recommend you ask your family medical doctor to refer you for a sleep study in order to minimize

future health problems.

Researchers from the University of Wisconsin, found that in a study of 1,500 people that patients with sleep apnea were 5 times more likely to develop cancer. Scientists now believe that sleep apnea lowers the oxygen level in the blood which can trigger the development of cancerous tumors by promoting the growth of the vessels that feed them. (American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine).

The sleep specialist will make the diagnosis of mild, moderate or severe sleep apnea. Patients who are diagnosed with severe sleep apnea are recommended to be treated with the CPAP (Continuous Positive Air Pressure) device which consists of an air compressor that forces air up the nose all night to open the airway. Many patients with severe sleep apnea love their CPAP device as it

eliminates their snoring and excessive daytime sleepiness. The treatment of choice for patients with mild to moderate sleep apnea if there are no medical problems or other sleep disorders is the custom fit oral appliance. This custom mouth piece fits comfortably over the upper and lower teeth and effectively treats the snoring and sleep apnea by gently moving the lower jaw forward to open the airway. Some patients are unable to tolerate the CPAP device and they are encouraged to try the oral appliance. Patients must go for follow up sleep studies with the CPAP or oral appliance to prove that the treatment has eliminated the snoring and sleep apnea.

It is important to understand that oral appliances that are offered on the internet are legally not permitted to be sold to patients with sleep apnea. They are advertised only as

devices to stop snoring. Since most patients who snore also have sleep apnea I advise all patients to get a sleep study and get treated properly by either a sleep specialist with a CPAP or a qualified dentist with a custom made oral appliance.

It is important for your quality of sleep and indeed your overall health that if you snore and are tired during the daytime that you get this problem checked before it affects your health and your relationship with your bed partner.

In our office, Dr. Rondeau has over 20 years experience in treating patients who snore and have sleep apnea with oral appliances.

Please call our office today to set up a free consultation appointment, 519-455-4110. Also, consult the website at www.ortho-tmj.com for more details on snoring and sleep apnea.

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