



Health And Well-Being

Understanding Sleep Apnea

(NAPSA)—It can seem humorous in cartoons, but snoring can be a symptom of a serious problem: sleep apnea. Thirty percent of adult males and 20 percent of adult females suffer from sleep apnea.

The Problem

People with this problem, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports, characteristically make periodic gasping or “snorting” noises, during which their sleep is momentarily interrupted. This can lead to excessive daytime sleepiness and can pose serious health implications. The condition has been linked to obesity, heart disease and other illnesses.

More than 12 million Americans suffer from sleep apnea, and an estimated 10 million more have it and don't even know it.

A Cause

One common cause is temporomandibular (jaw joint) disorder, or TMD, which can also cause headaches, including migraines; neck, back and shoulder pain; ringing in the ears; jaw popping; and tingling fingers.

TMD stems from a bad bite, meaning your upper teeth and lower teeth don't close together correctly. When that happens, the muscles in your head and neck are strained and constantly looking for a more relaxed position.

An Answer

Fortunately, TMD and sleep apnea are treatable by specially



If you or someone you care about has sleep apnea, headaches or jaw pain, a special kind of dentist may be able to help.

trained neuromuscular dentists. They perform comprehensive evaluations that include measuring the strain on your jaw muscles electronically. Using computer analysis, a neuromuscular dentist will locate your jaw's most comfortable resting position.

Once the new jaw position is found, the dentist can fit you with a mouth guard-like device for use when sleeping or fit you with crowns and veneers to make this new pain-free, sleep-enhancing jaw position permanent. According to Dr. Mark Duncan of the Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies, only 5 percent of the world's dentists are trained in neuromuscular dentistry.

Learn More

To learn more and to locate a specially trained neuromuscular dentist near you, visit www.leadingedentists.com.