

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

oral appliance therapy for snoring & obstructive sleep apnea

? What options are available for treating my snoring or sleep apnea?

i Medical and dental treatment options for treating snoring and sleep apnea include: Positional Devices, CPAP, Oral Appliance Therapy and Surgery. For details on these treatment options, click here.

? How does the appliance work to help manage snoring/sleep apnea?

i An oral appliance is a small plastic device that fits over the upper and lower teeth, similar to an orthodontic retainer or mouth guard. The appliance is worn in the mouth during sleep to prevent the soft tissues of the throat from collapsing and closing off the airway. Oral appliances work by slightly advancing the lower jaw which moves the base of the tongue forward and opens the airway to allow improved breathing and reduced snoring and apneas during sleep.

? What percentage of people find the appliance to be effective?

i If the problem is snoring only, the appliance is effective in approximately 85%-90% of patients. When treating apnea, the appliance is 60-80% effective, depending on the severity of the apnea. The appliance tends to be more effective for mild to moderate obstructive sleep apnea although we have had success in treating numerous cases of severe apnea.

? How do you confirm the effectiveness of the oral appliances?

i Patients with moderate or severe sleep apnea must have a follow-up sleep study while using the oral appliance to confirm the effectiveness of the device. During the follow-up sleep study, the jaw position on the appliance can be adjusted to increase treatment success. Following the sleep study, a consultation with the sleep medicine physician will be necessary to discuss the results.

? How long do these appliances last?

i Under normal circumstances the appliances generally last 2-5 years, but many will last longer than 5 years.

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? How much does treatment with an appliance cost?

i We work with a variety of appliances and each appliance is customized to the individual. The fee for the oral appliance ranges from \$800 to \$3,150, depending upon the features of the device.

? Does my insurance cover appliance treatment?

i Since insurance plans vary widely we work with all of our patients to help them obtain reimbursement from their insurance carrier to the maximum allowed by their plan. Most insurance companies have coverage for treatment of obstructive sleep apnea with an oral appliance. Insurance companies generally do not cover treatment for snoring only. If coverage is available for oral appliances, it would come from the medical insurance carrier. Most dental insurance companies do not cover treatment of obstructive sleep apnea. We encourage you to call and check with your medical insurance company. We will be happy to send information to your insurance company regarding your situation to request a determination of benefits.

? How many visits are involved with the appliance?

i After the initial consultation, there may be 2-3 appointments within the first 6 months. Thereafter, you will be placed on an annual or semi-annual recall.

? How long does it take to adapt to the appliance? Will the device cause soreness in my teeth or jaw?

i 95% of patients will adapt to the appliance within 2-7 days. It will take a few days to adapt to having a device in your mouth during sleep. The appliance should not cause soreness in the teeth or jaw. If your teeth or jaw are sore after initial use, we can easily adjust it for your comfort.

IF YOU HAVE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS CALL US AT ANY TIME. WE ARE HAPPY TO HELP.

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