Snoring Can Kill!!

Discover How Sleep Apnea Can Be Ruining Your Life

Joseph L. Goldstein

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When I was diagnosed with Sleep Apnea, in spite of my doctor’s very brief explanation and my own extensive research, I realized that there was no book or website that provided a simplified, easy to understand explanation of the causes of Sleep Apnea.

Hopefully this book will be of value to you and your family in understanding the causes and treatments for this life-threatening disease.

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CONTENTS

1  Please Note 9

2  Ruined Lives 13

3  Sleeping, Breathing, Snoring and Sleep Apnea 23

4  The Mystery of Sleep 25

5  Breathing 31

6  Snoring 35

7  Sleep Apnea, The Nighttime Killer 39

8  Sleep Disorder Centers and Your Sleep Study 45

9  Methods of Treatment 49

10  Summary 59

Appendix One—American Sleep Disorders Association Accredited Sleep Centers 63

Appendix Two—Home Health Care Respiratory Therapists 81

Appendix Three—Sleep Disorders Dental Society Membership 121
I am not a doctor, I am not even a health professional. I am a regular, everyday working person just like you who snores so loudly that my wife and I have been sleeping in separate bedrooms for over 20 years.

Believe me, just like every other problem snorer, I have been the butt of many snoring jokes and insults and always thought my snoring was harmless and perfectly normal.

Then one day I discovered that snoring was absolutely no joke and that I had a very serious medical problem that could eventually cause catastrophic problems to my well-being and quality of life.

This intentionally concise, easy to read, nontechnical, nonmedical book is intended to inform you of the very serious health risks and potentially deadly consequences of undiagnosed, untreated snoring. It explains how you
can determine if you or someone in your family might require further medical diagnosis, what tests are available, and what to expect if you discover that you are a victim of this debilitating, life-threatening medical problem associated with your snoring.

Please note that I am not a doctor, and although my personal opinions will undoubtedly sneak in every once in a while, it is not my intention to give medical advice since I am not qualified to do so!

There are hundreds of excellent, more technical, medically oriented books available at any bookstore or library that go into greater detail on snoring and related sleep disorder problems with in-depth, complicated, scientific descriptions and terms. But my primary goal is to quickly present to the reader, in the most simple, easy to understand language, the basic facts about the potential dangers of snoring and to convince anyone who might feel they have the symptoms related to this problem to seek competent medical assistance immediately.

For the past several years, I have studied sleep disorders to learn more about my own snoring problems and have traveled worldwide to meet with the leading medical and dental experts in this field. The most important warning I can give is to be very careful of so-called cures for snoring.
In newspapers, on the radio and on TV, there are advertisements for miraculous laser and surgical medical procedures that might work well for normal snoring difficulties. But these same procedures could cause irreparable damage if the sufferer has more severe sleep disorder problems.

In addition, there are also many drugstore products and over-the-counter medications readily available without prescription that claim to eliminate or minimize snoring as well as other sleep disorders. But without proper medical advice and examination, these products and procedures may not be adequate or safe to relieve your particular snoring condition and could jeopardize your health.

If you feel that you might have a sleep-related problem that is affecting your quality of life and your happiness, I urge you to see a sleep specialist. It is absolutely essential to get competent medical advice from sleep disorder experts and to follow their recommendations faithfully to overcome the many day-to-day health problems and deadly medical risks that snoring-related sleep disorders can cause.
I would wake up every morning feeling miserable, tired and sluggish without knowing the cause.
Chapter 2
Ruined Lives

Tomorrow morning, more than 30 million Americans will wake up feeling terrible. They will start the day tired and sluggish with a bad headache. They will be irritable and have a difficult time getting off to a good start. When they get to work, they will be drowsy and might even nap at their desk. As they drive home, they will have a difficult time staying awake or may actually fall asleep behind the wheel and be involved in a dangerous, life-threatening accident. At home, they will probably have an argument with the family and be cranky. All through the day they will try to pep themselves up with coffee or other stimulants to fight this distressing fatigue.

These same unfortunate sufferers will have sexual and marital problems, toss and turn during a restless night’s sleep and get up many times during the night to go to the bathroom.

When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? And I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day.

— Job 7.4
When and if they consult their doctor, there is a good possibility they will be misdiagnosed and told that their fatigue is caused by worry, a hormonal deficiency, lack of vitamins, or is just a normal part of growing old.

But the sad truth is that in many cases these symptoms are caused by a very harmful, life-threatening sleep disorder closely related to snoring called sleep apnea. If left undiagnosed and untreated, sleep apnea can be a deadly killer causing heart problems, stroke, high blood pressure, mental deterioration and a multitude of other unexplained physical problems.

I know full well about this problem and the miserable effects it can have on one’s life. Because until November 22, 1996, I was an unknowing victim of sleep apnea and suffered the many dire consequences of this disorder without being aware of the reason for my feeling so depressed, tired and miserable even after what I considered to be a good night’s sleep.

I would wake up in the morning feeling more tired than when I went to bed. I would have a pounding headache all morning until I took aspirin after aspirin to relieve the pain. I would lack energy and have a tough time getting along with people, especially my family. My job and family life were in trouble. I felt awful, miserable, depressed and constantly sleepy. For over 20 years I went from doctor to doctor describing how I felt and was repeatedly told by some of the finest doctors in
I would have a pounding headache all morning until I took aspirin to relieve the pain.
California that I needed more exercise, that my problems were stress related, or that I was getting older and my fatigue and depression were normal for my age. But none of these suggestions worked, and the same distressing symptoms persisted year after year.

It was just a coincidence that during a yearly physical examination, I mentioned to my doctor that I was much more tired and irritated during the day, that my snoring had become more intense, and that I was drinking coffee to fight my fatigue. He recommended that I see a sleep specialist, since I had the symptoms of sleep apnea, an ailment that I knew absolutely nothing about.

Because I felt I was getting enough sleep every night, I thought it highly improbable that my years of fatigue and exhaustion resulted from my snoring. But I decided to consult with a sleep specialist at the UCLA Medical Center.

At my initial appointment, within just minutes of completing my physical examination, the doctor unequivocally told me that in all probability I had been suffering from sleep apnea for years without being aware of it. He said the back of my tongue was exceptionally large and my jaw was not in the normal forward position relative to my upper teeth. People with these problems usually have difficulty breathing while they’re asleep, resulting in heavy snoring and dangerous sleep apnea. He urged me to have a sleep test to confirm his findings.
I would stop breathing and gasp for breath all through the night!
My overnight sleep study was completed on November 22, 1996. I definitely had sleep apnea. It caused me to stop breathing hundreds of times per hour for sometimes as long as two minutes, starving my lungs of precious oxygen and forcing me to wake up repeatedly to gasp for air within minutes of falling asleep. This constant, continuous arousal from sleep night after night was the culprit ruining my life!

It was a miraculous revelation to me to find out that my many years of suffering were related to my heavy snoring and that there was a solution to the problem. For like the vast majority of people, I considered my snoring a fact of life, something that became louder and more intense as I became older.

I have snored for years, and if ever medals were handed out for championship snoring, there is no doubt in my mind or in my family's mind who the unquestioned winner would be. Nobody, but nobody, can beat me in the quality, loudness and intensity of my snoring. My snores can be heard throughout our entire home all during the night. It's irritating and even frightening to anyone unfortunate enough to be in the vicinity of my bedroom.

Anyone sleeping in the same bed with me, or for that matter in the same house, would certainly attest to this fact. Simply ask my wife, my daughter or my son, and they will all tell you in great detail what an annoyance.
and embarrassment my snoring has been to them over the years.

To save our marriage and sanity, it became necessary many years ago for me to sleep in a separate bedroom, since it was impossible for my wife to get a good night’s sleep. My snoring was an irritating problem that caused constant arguing and hard feelings night after night.

Sleeping together was an unpleasant, continuing battle. Every time I would fall asleep and start my annoying snoring and severe tossing and turning, my wife would gently nudge me to interrupt my sleep, hoping that I would turn over to a new position and stop snoring for a few precious minutes so that she could fall asleep before the awful racket started all over again. More often than not, this subtle technique worked without my being aware of it. But when I caught her doing it, I would become infuriated, and insist that I was entitled to sleep and snore if I had to, and that she had absolutely no right to disturb my sleep, since I worked hard all day long, I was the breadwinner of the family, and she would just have to grin and bear the problem. This situation put a serious strain on our marriage for years.

At other times, when the snoring was too intense and annoying to my wife, I would, in an angry huff, grab a blanket and pillow and sleep on the living room sofa just to avoid the arguments and frustration caused by my snoring.
Off to the living room sofa.
My wife still tells our friends of our horrible, embarrassing Caribbean vacation experience. Several years ago, we were staying at a fancy hotel in Puerto Rico that had primitive little cabins right on the beach. It was lovely and very romantic with the moon and the stars and the sound of the ocean. But my nightly snoring was so loud and annoying that the sound carried in the deep silence of the night to other guests in the neighboring cabins, who phoned the front desk to complain about the awful snoring that was keeping them up. We checked out the following morning!

My hope is to warn you about the severe dangers of snoring-related sleep apnea. In approximately 30 minutes of reading time, I want to make you very aware of the causes and consequences of some forms of snoring that can cause death and certainly affect your day-to-day health. I want to alert you to the important warning signs of possible problems, the urgent need for obtaining competent medical advice from the highly qualified, certified sleep disorder specialists, respiratory therapists and sleep disorder dentists that are listed in the appendixes, and above all to urge you to seek immediate help to quickly bring health, vitality and happiness back into your life if you feel you have a sleep-related problem.
Keep it quiet, your snoring’s keeping us up!
Chapter 3

Sleeping, Breathing, Snoring and Sleep Apnea

This year thousands of people throughout the world will die from sleep apnea. Many will die during sleep in the early hours before dawn. The cause of death probably will be listed as a heart attack or "from unknown causes," but in actuality they will have died from an ailment they didn't even know the name of. That ailment is sleep apnea.

It may seem unbelievable, but it is estimated that as many as 30 million Americans of all ages suffer from this unknown killer. However, sleep apnea takes its greatest toll on middle-aged and senior citizens. It is estimated that more than 10 million senior citizens, or approximately 8 million men and 2 million women over the age of 65, in the United States have sleep apnea, and these numbers are increasing daily as the population ages.
To appreciate fully how menacing sleep apnea can be, its effect on your body and the resultant dangers if it's untreated, you must understand the relationship between sleeping, breathing, snoring and, most importantly, sleep apnea.
We all need a good night’s sleep to feel refreshed and adequately energized for our daytime activities. Sleep is far more vital to our health than most people realize. It has a tremendous influence on our overall physical health and our ability to cope with our normal daytime activities. Many of our daily problems, in addition to physical and emotional ailments, can be the result of our inability to get a good night’s rest.

Without a good night’s sleep, we are irritable, tired all day and unable to work at our maximum efficiency.

Within the last 50 years, the science of sleep has advanced to the unbelievable stage that our sleep can be charted, identified and carefully analyzed. Based on this valuable information, the relationship between sleep and good health has been firmly established.
Experimental tests have been performed in which patients have been deprived of sleep for long periods of time. As a result of this sleep deprivation, psychological problems, mental slowness, lack of alertness and other forms of physical side effects resulted.

Today, with computers and modern technology, it is possible to accurately measure the various stages of sleep, to analyze the quality of sleep, and to discover any problems we may be experiencing during sleep.

When we sleep, we pass through five different levels. Each level is extremely important to our well-being and quality of sleep.

These various levels of sleep are divided into two distinct stages: REM (rapid eye movement) sleep and non-REM sleep. The best sleep requires the proper balance of REM and non-REM sleep. To wake up feeling well rested and physically able to fulfill a normal daytime schedule, it is essential to have not only a sufficient amount of deep REM sleep (about 100 minutes per night) but also the proper proportion of REM and non-REM sleep.

Science has learned that there is a predictable, normal cycle to our sleep pattern.

When we first get into bed, shut off the lights and close our eyes, we enter the first level of non-REM sleep. As we relax, we think about our day’s activities, our family, sometimes our problems, and then eventually we
doze off into a semihypnotic, relaxing, extremely calm level of sleep. As the minutes go by, we start to sleep more soundly, and our body floats into deeper and deeper levels of non-REM sleep.

During this period of non-REM sleep, significant physical changes take place. The body becomes more and more relaxed and our breathing and brain activity slow down.

About an hour and a half after falling asleep, REM sleep usually takes over from non-REM sleep, with the body cycling between periods of REM and non-REM sleep throughout the night.

REM sleep is very different from non-REM sleep, and it is the deepest, most important stage of the sleep cycle. It is the bewildering dream period that we have all experienced, during which we may have vivid and sometimes weird dreams about our acquaintances, our sexual fantasies or perhaps our childhood, that may or may not be remembered upon awakening. It is essential to reach this stage of sleep nightly if we want to be well rested and healthy.

During critical REM sleep, breathing becomes irregular, alternating between periods of slow and rapid breathing, while the blood circulation within our brain increases. Additionally, our major muscles become paralyzed and, most significantly, our eyes move about rapidly from side to side as if they were watching a
tennis match. This “rapid eye movement” gives the REM stage its name.

As the night progresses and the body cycles from one sleep stage to another, the non-REM periods of sleep shorten, while the REM periods increase, especially toward the early morning hours of sleep.

Although we require the proper balance of REM and non-REM sleep, getting a sufficient amount of deep REM sleep is most important for good health and vitality. Unfortunately, many people do not reach this important REM stage of sleep and are troubled with constant fatigue and lack of energy during the day.

Heavy snorers, and especially snorers who are victims of sleep apnea, do not reach this critical REM stage often enough to obtain the benefits of this important level of sleep. The inability to obtain enough REM sleep can have detrimental consequences, causing many undiagnosed serious emotional and physical health problems.
It became increasingly difficult to stay awake during the day.
Right Lung

Left Lung

Heart

Tongue

Air Inlet
Nose and Mouth

Open Airway to Lungs
Chapter 5
Breathing

Most of us never even think about breathing unless we have a stuffy nose, an allergy or a cold that affects our normal ability to breathe. Breathing is an involuntary physical action we do throughout our life. Although we can hold our breath for a short period of time, we must start breathing again to provide vital oxygen to our brain and body. We take over 20,000 breaths each day to supply our body with oxygen while breathing out carbon dioxide.

Ideally, we should breathe primarily through our nose. As we inhale through our nostrils, the air is filtered, heated and moistened as it starts its path toward our lungs. If we are expending a great deal of energy (perhaps by running or doing other strenuous physical activity), our bodies need more oxygen quickly. So we automatically start breathing through our mouth, since this is a faster and more direct path to get air into our body.
lungs. This action is monitored and controlled by the brain, which constantly checks the amount of gases in the bloodstream. When the brain senses a low level of oxygen and an excess of harmful carbon dioxide in the bloodstream, it sends out an emergency signal to our breathing pump, our diaphragm, which starts pumping harder and faster to furnish more oxygen to our lungs.

Oxygen is the vital fuel our body uses to convert the nutrients in food into energy. In each and every cell of our body, the nutrients combine with the oxygen and burn, producing the energy required for cell growth, vitality and overall good health.

The millions of cells in our body need a continuous supply of oxygen. To furnish this oxygen, we inhale and exhale continuously through our nose and mouth to transport fresh air into our lungs and to discharge the used air, carbon dioxide, out of our body.

The heart is continually pumping fresh blood into our lungs, where the blood combines with pure oxygen. The oxygen-carrying blood then flows through our entire body, delivering to each and every cell fresh fuel and gathering up carbon dioxide, which is transported back into the lungs to be exhaled through our nose and mouth.

This automatic breathing cycle continues over and over again throughout our lifetime and is absolutely essential to human life. Accordingly, it is important that
No Obstructions—Oxygen is being delivered to lungs.
there be no obstruction or restriction in our nose, mouth and throat to impede a generous supply of oxygen to our lungs and consequently to our whole body.

For the vast majority of us, breathing during the day is no problem. But during our nighttime sleep, significant changes take place within our body, causing our breathing patterns to change. These new breathing patterns make it much more difficult to breathe and can cause snoring as well as sleep apnea.
Chapter 6
Snoring

Imagine driving down a newly paved, two-lane highway. Your drive is smooth, quiet, fast and effortless. Suddenly one lane is closed for repair and traffic is diverted to the other lane. This lane is filled with potholes, road barriers and other road damages, so your drive unexpectedly becomes bumpy, noisy and considerably slower, requiring more physical effort on your part. Basically, this is analogous to the cause of snoring.

During sleep, all the muscles of the body relax, especially in the throat and airway leading to the lungs. This causes the road, or airway, that transports oxygen to the lungs to become narrower, making it extremely difficult to breathe. In addition, the nose may become blocked or congested due to physical abnormalities such as a deviated septum (perhaps caused by a previously broken nose or other old injury) or from an allergy, cold
Partial Obstruction—More difficult to deliver oxygen to lungs, causing snoring.
or sinus condition. To complicate matters even more, the tongue may fall backwards toward your throat, especially if you sleep on your back, causing additional narrowing of the airway and further restricting your ability to breathe easily as you attempt to get precious oxygen to your lungs.

All of these partial breathing obstructions caused by muscle relaxation, nasal congestion and tongue movement during sleep produce snoring, which is in actuality a loud vibration, or annoying noise, created in the back part of your throat. The more effort required by your body to breathe during sleep due to these physical obstructions, the louder and more intense will be the snoring level.

Drinking alcohol several hours before bedtime, taking sleeping medications or being overweight will further contribute to the snoring level.

In most instances, nondangerous snoring is a continuous repetition of snore-snore-snore sounds without any unusual or frightening nonbreathing or gasping intervals. However, if the cycle consists of snoring, then a period of silence and then a violent gasping for breath, this is a good indicator of problem snoring.

Over 80 million Americans are estimated to snore either nightly or intermittently. For many of these snorers, aside from being annoying, there is only a
minimal health risk from snoring. There are safe and effective medical solutions readily available to help a person stop snoring. However, these procedures should only be considered after consultation with qualified medical professionals. For an estimated 30 million snorers in the United States, snoring may be caused by sleep apnea, a far more serious health problem.

To hear a recording of normal snoring as well as dangerous sleep apnea snoring, with a brief explanation of the significant differences between each type, simply phone 1-888-35-SNORE (1-888-357-6673), or on the Internet visit our Web site, snoringcankill.com. Use the password “snore.”
Chapter 7

Sleep Apnea, The Nighttime Killer

"Apnea: the absence of breathing or the want of breath."

I learned I had sleep apnea only a few years ago. Until then, I had never heard of this very serious sleep disorder, its dangerous consequences to everyday living and its potential to cause an early death. For these reasons, it’s of the utmost importance if you’re concerned about excessive snoring to learn the life-threatening facts about sleep apnea and to seek medical advice if you suspect a medical problem.

To easily understand what sleep apnea is and how it affects our health, let’s go back to the imaginary two-lane road. In that example, at first the two lanes were open and traffic flowed normally. When one lane was closed and partial obstructions and roadblocks were placed in
Complete Obstruction—Unable to breathe. No oxygen being delivered to lungs. “Sleep Apnea”
the other lane, traffic continued in just one lane at a slower speed, but eventually everyone arrived at their destination.

Using this same illustration, let’s assume that you, the reader, are driving a truck filled with precious oxygen that you must deliver to your own lungs. You are driving along this one-lane obstructed highway, when suddenly you come to an emergency signal, indicating that traffic will be completely stopped for 30 seconds, 60 seconds or perhaps for even as long as two minutes because a fallen tree is blocking the entire road. Imagine also that after you pass this tree, suddenly within just seconds or minutes you reach another obstruction to further delay your trip, once again for 30 seconds, 60 seconds or longer, and that these delays occur over and over and over again, perhaps a hundred or more times each hour of your trip, causing your lungs to be deprived of precious oxygen during each roadway obstruction.

Victims of sleep apnea have a similar problem getting oxygen to their lungs. During sleep, due to physical obstructions such as the muscles in the throat relaxing, nasal congestion or the backward movement of the tongue, the airway becomes totally blocked, making it impossible to breathe and transport needed air to the lungs. This blockage causes a dangerous, deadly, life-threatening lowering of the oxygen level within the body and especially within the brain.
When I was examined to determine what was causing my severe fatigue problems, I was amazed to learn, through a sleep study, of the sequence of violent events taking place nightly during my sleep. I was astounded to discover that as I slept, my throat muscles would relax and my tongue would at the same time flop backwards toward the back of my mouth, completely sealing off the airway to my lungs. My body would be totally and dangerously starved for oxygen for as long as two minutes, and then suddenly an emergency response from my brain would automatically cause me to wake up, gasping for air, and then resume breathing again. Once again, almost immediately I would fall back to sleep, and within a very short time this vicious sleep/no breath/wake up cycle would start again and continue over and over again during the night. I was never aware of or remembered this deadly sleeping and waking up cycle in the morning.

I learned through my sleep study that this was happening hundreds of times per hour and that amazingly I stopped breathing sometimes for as long as two minutes, which would be impossible for me to do while awake!

In addition to learning that I suffered from sleep apnea, I also discovered that some of my nonbreathing episodes were caused by the action of my brain, which simply shut down my breathing mechanism. When the brain is the cause of the apnea, it is called central sleep
apnea. The combination of central sleep apnea and apnea caused by a physical obstruction within the airway is called mixed apnea.

Although it is normal and not harmful for most people to stop breathing for a short time during sleep, if within an hour there are 30 or more nonbreathing apnea cycles that last for more than 10 seconds, a person would be diagnosed with sleep apnea.

Depriving the body of oxygen for such long periods of time over and over again, night after night, is the cause of extremely dangerous physical consequences. Elevated blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes, as well as serious emotional and psychotic disorders, can be attributed to sleep apnea, since it deprives precious oxygen to the brain every few seconds or minutes continuously throughout sleep.

In addition to these serious, deadly problems caused by the continuing lack of oxygen to the lungs, sleep apnea creates many other subtle, undiagnosed medical and emotional problems for its victims. These problems are not caused primarily by the lack of oxygen to the body, but by the hundreds and hundreds of waking up, gasping for breath and falling back to sleep cycles that make it almost impossible for a sleep apnea sufferer to reach the REM stage of sleep.

Sleep apnea is a dangerous disorder that requires immediate, competent diagnosis and treatment. There
are treatments that can eliminate your snoring to give you a good night’s sleep, restore your health and vitality, and eliminate the risk of death from sleep apnea.

If you snore excessively and have any of these symptoms, please consult a sleep specialist:

- High blood pressure
- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Frequent awakenings during the night
- Frequent trips to the bathroom at night
- Restless sleep
- Falling asleep while driving or at work
- Morning headaches
- Indigestion and/or reflux
- Nausea
- Depression
- Irritable behavior
- Extreme anxiety
- Problems at work
- Impotence
- Dry mouth upon awakening
Chapter 8
Sleep Disorder Centers and Your Sleep Study

As mentioned previously, it is unlikely that a doctor can determine if you have a sleep disorder problem, such as sleep apnea, without specialized training and medical certification in this field.

Throughout this book I have suggested over and over again that if you feel that your fatigue and suffering might possibly be due to excessive snoring, you should immediately consult with a sleep specialist. However, with the preponderance of HMOs and other health insurance providers controlling the procedure, in most cases you will first have to discuss your concerns with your primary doctor and review your symptoms and problems. After this discussion, if your doctor concludes that you may possibly have a sleep-related problem, you will be referred to a sleep disorder center.
If, however, you are on Medicare or another health plan that permits you to make your own medical choices, you might want to contact a sleep disorder center directly. Included in Appendix One is a geographic list of sleep disorder centers throughout the United States that have been accredited by the American Sleep Disorders Association. These centers must meet rigid continuing standards, both in state-of-the-art training and sleep test evaluation techniques, for accreditation.

Before being seen by a sleep specialist, you will usually be asked to fill out a form detailing your sleep habits, amount of time slept, your symptoms, and how you felt on each day during a week or more prior to your examination.

When you do visit your sleep specialist, he or she will review and discuss your questionnaire with you and then ask additional, more detailed questions to determine your medical and emotional problems.

A thorough physical examination will then be performed with special emphasis on your nose, throat, tongue, jaw and especially your airway.

Based on this examination and the suspicion that sleep apnea might be the cause of your physical problems, your doctor will recommend that you spend one or two nights at the sleep center for a sleep test to determine if you suffer from sleep apnea.
Usually the first night of the sleep test is to determine if you do have sleep apnea. Just as with an EKG, which is utilized to study your heart, wires will be connected to your body to record and analyze continuously throughout the night the following vital data:

- Brain wave activity—to determine the depth and proportion of REM and non-REM sleep as well as wakefulness and sleep length
- Eye movement
- Vital heart statistics
- Muscle relaxation in jaw, tongue and throat—to determine obstruction
- Leg movement

Additionally, other monitoring devices will be connected to your body to measure your oxygen levels, your inhalation and exhalation levels, and also the degree of muscular difficulty you might experience when you breathe.

Prior to your actual sleep study, you will be prepared for your sleep evaluation by a board-certified sleep technician, who will spend the entire night in an adjacent room monitoring the sleep study equipment. Periodically, the technician will come to your room to make adjustments to the various sensors connected to your body to make certain that you are comfortable and relaxed. If ever during the sleep study you are in distress
or need to go to the restroom, the technician is available to disconnect the wiring hookup for your personal convenience.

Based on the data obtained during your first night's sleep study, the sleep doctor will determine if you have sleep apnea and its severity. If you do have sleep apnea, you will be requested to return (usually on the following night) for additional studies to determine the specific treatment to eliminate your sleep apnea.
Chapter 9
Methods of Treatment

Throughout recorded history, there have been references to sleep apnea and snoring problems. Fortunately for us, the methods of treatment are far more advanced, effective and painless than in years past.

In earlier times, the tongues of sleep apnea sufferers were often stitched to their bottom lip to keep the airway open. Another bizarre procedure involved sewing the tip of the tongue to the front teeth to keep the tongue forward while sleeping. Other painful, and oftentimes brutal, surgical procedures were attempted to cure the problem. Additionally, large, bulky, uncomfortable dental appliances were also utilized that forced the patient’s lower jaw forward in order to move the tongue away from the airway.

CPAP

The most significant and beneficial advancement in the treatment of sleep apnea occurred in 1980 in Sydney,
CPAP keeps the airway open so normal breathing can take place.
Australia, when the brilliant and dedicated sleep researcher, Dr. Colin E. Sullivan, discovered a unique, noninvasive, 100 percent effective technique for eliminating sleep apnea. This technique is recognized throughout the world as state-of-the-art treatment because it has enabled millions of sufferers to obtain a good night's sleep every night without any snoring or gasping for air. They wake up miraculously refreshed and invigorated, thanks to his ingenuity.

Dr. Sullivan's discovery led to the development of small, compact, very efficient machines that blow air through the nostrils into the airway, keeping the passageway from collapsing during sleep so that normal, regular breathing can take place. The air pressure is extremely low, since it is not being used to force air into the lungs, but simply to furnish enough air pressure to keep the airway open.

These are called CPAP (continuous positive air pressure) machines. On the second night of your sleep study, you will use a CPAP machine with a nose mask to see if it will eliminate your sleep apnea and also to determine the proper air settings for your needs. In most instances, during the second night of the sleep study, patients are amazed and delighted at how well they slept and how good they feel in the morning. I certainly did!

If CPAP does work well for you, you will be given a prescription for a machine and a nasal air delivery device and will also be referred to a home health care
Getting a good night’s sleep using a CPAP with a comfortable nasal air delivery device.*

*The illustrated nasal air delivery device is a patented invention of the author. For additional information on this product, contact Caren Publishing Group (310.454.4333).
respiratory therapist to familiarize you with the use of your new equipment, its care and maintenance. Of utmost importance will be the time spent with you by the therapist to ensure that your new nasal air delivery device is the proper size and fit and is comfortable.

The key to your success and health will be the nightly use of your CPAP. Your respiratory therapist will be a vital source of support and advice to make this significant change in your life as easy for you as possible. It is essential that you have a good relationship with your therapist and that you receive proper personalized service to get you through the first difficult months. If you don’t, you may be tempted to foolishly discontinue the use of CPAP. This would be unwise and unhealthy since, with help from your respiratory therapist, any problems you may experience can be overcome and you will be provided with a high level of user comfort. DON’T GIVE UP!

If you are not happy with the service, let them know—your life is at stake!

The location of over 600 home health care respiratory therapists who have been recommended by accredited sleep disorder centers throughout the United States are listed in Appendix Two to assist you in locating the best therapist in your area so that you can make this treatment work for you.
Alternative Sleep Apnea Treatments

Dental Devices

During the past several years, tremendous advances have been made by dentists in developing small, very comfortable dental devices that attach to the upper and lower sets of teeth. For many sufferers with mild to moderate sleep apnea who cannot tolerate CPAP, this is an excellent alternative. It is possible to alleviate their disorder by forcing the lower jaw forward with these devices. This action advances the tongue forward, away from the airway, and in many cases opens the airway sufficiently to eliminate the obstruction problem.

Appendix Three contains a list of the Sleep Disorders Dental Society membership. These dentists specialize in the treatment of sleep disorders and work in conjunction with sleep disorder physicians to provide the best solution to sleep apnea problems.

If you are considering the use of a dental device, be sure to first discuss your plans with your sleep doctor and have a sleep test performed using your dental device to be certain it is effective in eliminating your sleep apnea.
With a dental device (not shown), the jaw and tongue advance forward, opening the airway.
Surgery

In extremely severe cases of sleep apnea that cannot be treated with CPAP or dental devices, surgery may be the best course of treatment, although it is an extreme measure that should only be considered after all other alternatives have been explored. It is a very painful, drastic procedure during which the back of the tongue may be reduced in size, the jaw may be repositioned, and the opening leading into the airway may also be enlarged. Since the success rate is very low, a great deal of deliberation and discussion with your doctors and family should take place before proceeding with this treatment. If, however, you have other life-threatening problems, there may be no alternative to surgery. Consider carefully the risks and benefits of surgery and certainly get a second opinion.

Tracheostomy

Tracheostomy is the treatment of last resort when the patient is in such a weakened state that CPAP or surgery cannot be utilized and no other alternatives exist. A hole is made in the windpipe, below the obstruction, to allow unrestricted inhalation and exhalation. For sleep apnea sufferers, a small cap can be used during the day to seal the opening, and can be easily removed prior to going to sleep. Since the patient is breathing below the blocked section of the airway, healthy breathing is restored. Although it is an extreme measure, it can be 100 percent effective in many cases.
Self-Help Suggestions

In addition to the above treatments, the following will also help to eliminate or reduce the severity of sleep apnea:

- Lose weight to eliminate obesity
- Exercise
- Avoid alcoholic beverages for several hours prior to bedtime
- Discontinue use of sleeping pills and other sleep-inducing drugs (with your doctor’s permission)
- Sleep on your side, not on your back
- Use Breathe Right® nasal strips and saline nasal drops for easier breathing through your nose
- Sleep on a wedge or bolster that elevates your head and upper body
- Stop smoking
Chapter 10

Summary

Hopefully, this book has given you some insight and awareness of the possible dangers of nightly snoring. At every opportunity throughout this book, I have suggested over and over again that if you feel there is the slightest possibility that you are a victim of this dreadful disorder, you immediately seek competent medical assistance.

This is an extremely serious medical problem that cannot be taken lightly. It can play havoc with your life as well as the lives of your family. It can ruin your career, your marriage and your social life and cause extreme permanent mental and physical problems.

Millions of sleep apnea victims throughout the world have solved their sleeping problems through proper treatment and once again are enjoying lives that are now filled with vim, vigor and vitality.

Please don’t hesitate—act now to save your life!!

Sleep is the mystery of life, a wonderful performance of nature.

— Henri Amiel (1853)
Snoring and sleep apnea can be treated! Act today if you or someone you know has this problem!
Sleep Apnea Patients!
End The Torture Of CPAP!

Forget the painful mask!
Forget the annoying leaks onto your face!
Forget the continuous tightening of painful headgear!
Forget the painful sores and skin irritation!
Forget your awful full-face mask!

CPAP PRO® is much lighter weight than traditional face masks and its design minimizes skin contact so that it is far easier to forget that it is there and sleep comfortably. With severe skin irritation, annoying leakage and the need to constantly tighten straps, it is almost impossible for the patient to reach essential "REM" sleep with conventional masks. By eliminating these annoyances with CPAP PRO®, our patients tell us they are sleeping more comfortably and more soundly and waking up refreshed.

To order your CPAP PRO® go to www.nomask.com