

FEATURES



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CPAP Fail and Sleep Solutions

The Academy of Sleep Medicine estimates that 12% of the U.S. population suffer from Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) and that 80% of the cases remain undiagnosed. Most important, 50%-80% of patients are rejecting CPAP, the acceptable gold standard of care in the treatment of sleep disorders because they are unable to adhere to it.

The CPAP machine keeps your airway open by providing forced air through flexible tubing. CPAP therapy requires you to wear a mask as you sleep.

The Academy of Sleep Medicine has affirmed that oral appliances and dentist can often be the first line of OSA defense.

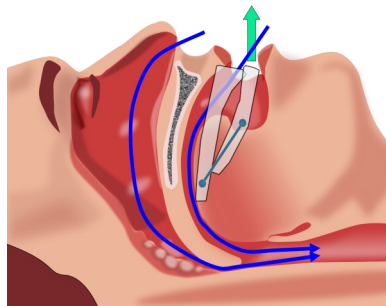
Let me introduce you to Oral Appliance Therapy. An oral appliance is a device worn in the mouth only during sleep. It fits like a sports mouth guard or orthodontic retainer. A custom fit oral sleep appliance is an effective treatment that prevents the airway from collapsing by supporting the jaw in a forward position. Many people like an oral appliance because it is comfortable, quiet, portable and easy to wear.

Oral Appliance Therapy should be provided by a qualified dentist who has technical skill and knowledge in dental sleep medicine.

Obstructive sleep apnea is when an individual struggles to breathe or even stops breathing during sleep. OSA causes intermittent hypoxemia, sleep fragmentation and stress to the heart, which can lead to health risks.

The most telling sign of OSA is snoring. Loud snoring is caused by the tongue falling back into the airway and crowding with the uvula and soft palate. This crowding causes vibration of the tissue as patients breathe, and the vibration is heard as snoring. However, it is important to note that just because someone snores doesn't necessarily mean the person has OSA.

Most of my patients are surprised to learn just how broadly a lack of sleep affects their ability to think at their best. Thanks to recent research, we now know that sleep deprivation interferes with brain function at a cellular level.



A study by scientists at UCLA found that [sleep deprivation interferes with the ability of some brain cells](#) to function and communicate with one another. We've got billions of neural cells working on our behalf, enabling us to make decisions, process

information, focus on important information—and remember it down the road. Sleep deprivation slows that work down, compromising our mental performance.

Many neurologists such as myself include sleep apnea in medical screenings, and include further evaluation and treatment. Eligible patients who are not responding well to CPAP are referred to a qualified dentist for oral appliance therapy.

Advances in technology enables patients to become more compliant with managing their Sleep Apnea.

Sleep Hygiene Tips



Nicci Kobritz, CEO
Youthful Aging Home Care

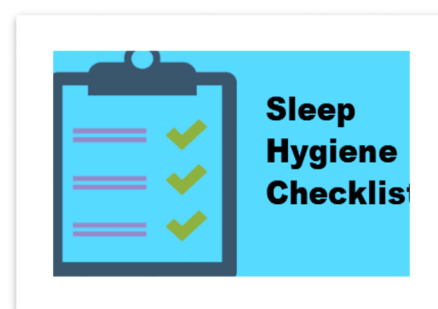
The great news is we can work to optimize sleep. Applying the strategies below will help improve both the quality and quantity of your sleep.

- Try to stick to a regular sleep schedule. It's not always possible because of family or work demands but do your best to have a regular bed and waking time.
- Make seven to eight hours of sleep your goal. Research shows that people getting less than six hours and more than nine hours are negatively impacted.
- No caffeine (or other stimulating beverages or supplements) past the early afternoon.
- Eat your last meal of the day at least three hours before bed. This promotes autophagy which cleans out cellular waste products. It's also much easier to sleep on an empty stomach.
- If you're struggling with sleep, refrain from alcohol. The sedative effect of alcohol may seem to help with sleep but research shows that it actually disrupts circadian rhythm and sleep-wake cycles leading to disrupted sleep.
- No TV in the bedroom.
- Switch to an eBook if you read before bed. Make sure to pick one that lights up (so you don't need a lamp) with blue blocking features that automatically turns off.
- Completely darken the bedroom or use a sleep mask. Any small bit of light at night will interfere with melatonin production, the body's natural sleep medicine.
- Keep the bedroom cool. Research shows that keeping the temperature between 60-67 degrees Fahrenheit depending on your preference, is optimal for sleep.
- Try a weighted blanket. In the same way babies, who are swaddled sleep more deeply, some adults report a similar effect with weighted blanket.
- Use a white noise machine if you're regularly interrupted with extraneous noise from your heating system, air conditioner, outside traffic, neighbors, etc. Have relaxing nature sounds (like rain, wind or waves) that you can set to your desired volume to drown out bothersome noise.
- Consider aromatherapy. Lavender essential oils have proven helpful in slowing heartbeat, relaxing muscles, and promoting slow wave sleep.

What if you wake up in the middle of the night with stress or anxiety? If you find that you're mulling over a negative event in the past or feeling stressed about a future event, try a sensory mindfulness technique. Begin by simply focusing on the gently natural rhythm of your breathing. Slowly breathe in and out. Gradually transition to focus on each of your five senses simultaneously.

By being fully present—not thinking about the past or future—you can relax and feel safe. With practice this can be very relaxing and help you drift off to sleep.

Thankfully, poor sleep is a modifiable risk factor. By regularly employing all of these sleep optimization strategies, you can make bedtime a nightly ritual that you actually anticipate for the relaxation experience. Improving sleep quality will also offer almost immediate benefits to your mood and overall cognitive performance.





Introducing "On Your Side" by our New YA Advocate—Sheila Birnbaum

Think of our monthly Wellness Guide as a physician's black bag comprising invaluable medical supplies—all for the purpose of inoculating you against stress that can accompany misunderstanding and miscommunication between patients, physicians, and other health-care professionals.

Every month, you'll strengthen your understanding of your role as health care partner, learning about such topics and applying your wealth of information.

"On Your Side" is a gift that keeps on giving: share your newfound knowledge with loved ones and others in order to fortify this community – and no one will have to take pills or other medication to strengthen our health because your Youthful Aging Advocate is "On Your Side."

So, dip into your black bag and become a proactive health-care-partner-collaborating with medical professionals so you can safeguard your health.

Sheila Birnbaum's professional career has been devoted to enhancing patient care. As the Director of the Patient Advocacy Program at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital (RWJUH), Hamilton, NJ, she instituted numerous programs, many which received statewide recognition, including several prestigious rewards.

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND

Question

We currently have home care for my mother because she is a fall risk. Please give me some prevention suggestions to share with our caregiver.

Answer

Risk for falls is a common concern for the elderly. You can have your caregiver do the following:

1. Identify trouble spots: clear away clutter and items like loose mats, cords and throw rugs.
2. Invest in safety equipment: install grab bars in the shower or tub and put non-skid mats on bathroom floors. A shower chair and a walker are also helpful.
3. Pay attention to health: regular eye exams and proper eyewear greatly reduce the risk of injury. Flat rubber-sole shoes improve balance and offer much needed traction.

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