

## Your sleeping patterns might be affecting your health

Years ago when attending a continuing education course, I was shocked to learn that more than 100 million Americans of all ages regularly fail to get a good night's sleep. That's over 30% of our population that are not getting the needed benefits of proper rest. Finding this number alarmingly high, I also thought about other family members that might not have a sleep disorder but are affected by a loved one who snores or gasps for air through the night, making it impossible for both to get a good night's rest.

Sleep deprivation takes a toll on your mind, body, and overall health in ways that might surprise you. Research shows that lack of sleep is linked to diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, colds and flu, mental health and obesity. So can adequate sleep protect you from illness? Absolutely.

Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA) is caused by numerous anatomical structures, and the mandible (lower jaw) and tongue are primary in causation. That's where dentistry comes into the picture. Once a dentist is thoroughly trained specifically in OSA, and if a dentist suspects a patient of having OSA, then we suggest a simple take-home test to evaluate your sleep. This test evaluates heart rate, amount of oxygen in your blood, amount of time spent snoring, and the number of times that your breathing stops.

Obstructive Sleep Apnea is a serious sleep disorder that occurs when a person's breathing is interrupted during sleep. People with untreated Sleep Apnea stop breathing repeatedly during their sleep, sometimes hundreds of times. This means the brain and the rest of the body may not get enough oxygen. Men, women and kids can suffer from it, and this can affect their performance at work or school.

How can you tell if you suffer from Sleep Apnea? At *Prosper Dental Health* we have the device to conduct a sleep study in the comfort of your home. You are able to take the device home and return it the next day so we are able, in coordination with a physician who is Board Certified in Sleep Disorders, to determine if you suffer from Sleep Apnea.

Once the physician makes a diagnosis and provides recommended treatment options, you may be appropriately treated with a simple oral appliance known as a Mandibular Advancement Device (MAD). You will be able to wear this appliance during your sleep. It helps by opening your airway so you can get the needed oxygen during your sleeping hours. Not only do we treat the Sleep Apnea patient but we also impact the rest of the family that is affected by their loved one's snoring and gasping for air.

I have many stories to tell you about patients treated with these oral appliances. Some of the best hugs I have received in my career are from them. Very often, when they come for their first post-treatment appointment, they feel better and are more rested. They are not falling asleep at work or behind the wheel. Some of them have stopped taking blood pressure medication, with doctor's permission, because it has returned to normal readings. It's a great feeling.

Don't miss the chance to know if something so dangerous for your health can be improved in a very effective and simple way. If you suspect you or a loved one suffers from Sleep Apnea, call *Prosper Dental Health* 972-347-2233.