

NATURAL REMEDIES FOR SNORING



Snoring is a problem that many people suffer from but few admit to. For many of them, snoring is embarrassing.

Snoring regularly affects 37 million Americans (about 25% female). It is defined as noisy breathing during sleep caused by air passing through a constricted airway. Mild snoring can be remedied by awakening the snorer or by changing his/her position... heavy snoring lasts most of the night, regardless of the person's position or how often he/she wakes. Snoring is not the same as sleep apnea. Sleep apnea is a breathing disorder. The sleeper (who may or may not be snoring) stops breathing and must awaken in order to start breathing again.

Chief causes of the airway constriction that triggers snoring are lack of fitness, being overweight, drinking alcohol before bed, smoking and nasal congestion. Men are more likely to snore than women, and if a first-degree relative (parent, sibling or child) snores, that also may make you more likely to suffer from snoring.

Food allergies are an often-overlooked cause of snoring. They lead to nasal congestion, allergic sinusitis and swelling in the upper respiratory tract. In one person's case, a simple blood test revealed that eggs were a problem for him. Eliminating eggs from his diet cured his nighttime "heavy breathing". For people who snore, dairy, wheat, eggs and soy are the most common food allergens. If you snore, try eliminating these foods for 10 days, one at a time, to see if your snoring is reduced. For quicker answers, ask your doctor for an allergy test.

Note: Be sure to get a blood test, which checks for IgG-mediated antibodies to common foods. Skin scratch allergy testing will not adequately determine snore-inducing food allergens.

Other helpful steps for people who snore...

Get fit and lose weight. Strengthening and tightening the muscles of the throat and losing weight will open airways and diminish snoring.

If you smoke, quit. Smoke irritates the tissue of the upper respiratory tract, causing the congestion and swelling that can lead to snoring.

Don't drink alcohol within two hours of bedtime. Drinking alcohol relaxes muscle tension. If you drink just before going to sleep, the muscles of your tongue and throat will be too lax and your airway will be narrowed -- a perfect trigger for snoring.

Review your medications. Drugs that relax the body -- sleeping pills, antihistamines, tranquilizers and muscle relaxants -- can cause snoring. Talk to your doctor about taking the smallest dose possible. Ask your pharmacist and/or doctor whether you can take the medication several hours before bedtime to help reduce the incidence of snoring.

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