

OTHER ORAL APPLIANCES

ORAL APPLIANCES FROM A DENTIST:

There are a number of different styles available and a dentist experienced in the field of Dental Sleep Medicine will advise on the most appropriate style for you. The fitting of the appliance generally requires an impression of your teeth to be taken before it is customized to your jaws and teeth. The MAS is adjusted to slowly bring the lower jaw forward and slowly reduce the sleep apnea without causing tooth and jaw discomfort. Private Health Rebates are available with Dental Extras.

OVER THE COUNTER PRODUCTS:

A number of cheaper 'boil and bite' products are available over the counter or from the internet. These cannot be recommended as they are poorly adapted to your teeth and can cause gum, tooth and jaw problems long term. They also cannot advance your jaw far enough to be effective in opening the airway. If you have tried one and it did not help your sleep, you cannot compare the outcome to that of a custom made to measure appliance made by a dentist trained in Dental Sleep Medicine.

ORAL APPLIANCES COMPARE WITH CPAP?

The view is that oral appliances are not as effective as CPAP in severe sleep apnea however this is an area of active research. Oral appliances are generally the first-line treatment option in patients with mild-moderate sleep apnea but require an experienced dentist to fit and monitor their effects. If despite everyone's best efforts, you cannot use CPAP all night, use of an oral appliance is a reasonable alternative.

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ABOUT US

Sleep Disorders Australia (SDA) is a voluntary Not-for-Profit organisation that provides information and offers support and assistance to people affected by sleep disorders throughout Australia. *SDA* advocates for the needs of people with sleep disorders and raises awareness of sleep disorders and the significance they can have on the lives of those affected by them. We also provide support and education with regards to the prevention and treatment of sleep disorders.

We would be delighted if you would join us. Membership is available to all sufferers, members of their family, medical professionals, and any member of the public who has an interest in the area of sleep disorders. You can join *SDA* via our website. For more information you can email our membership officer.

If you would like to support us with a donation. You can donate via our website or you can send a cheque to our address.

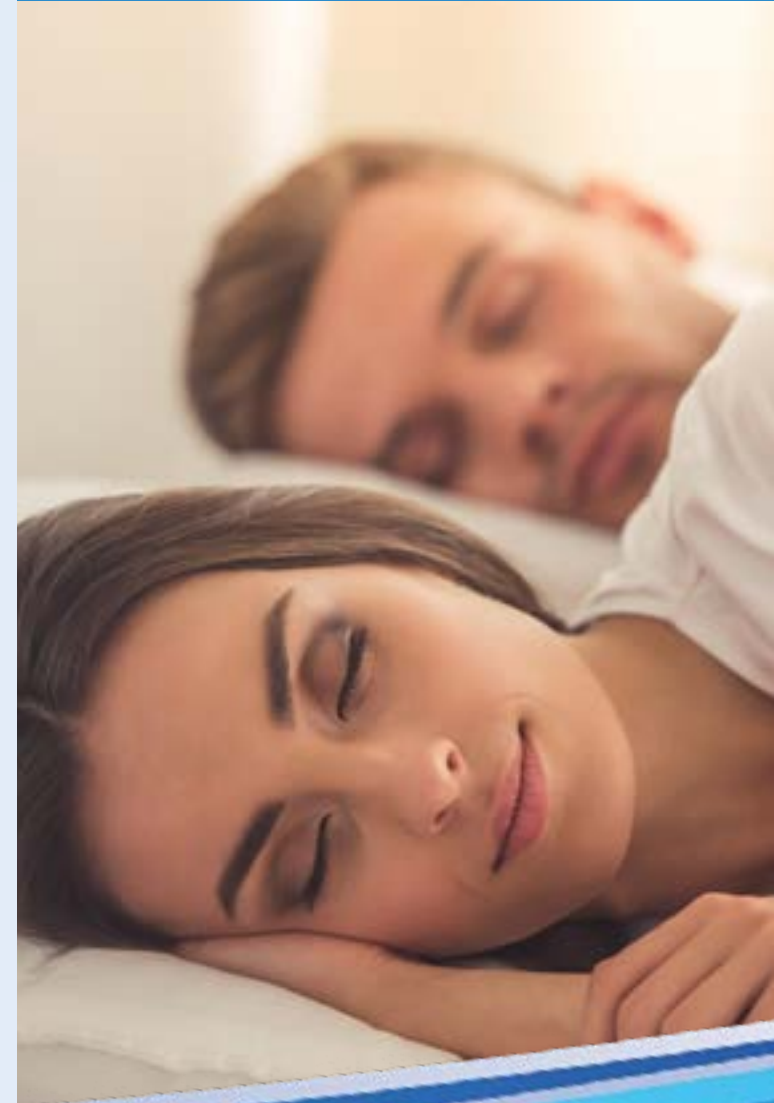


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ORAL APPLIANCES FOR SNORING AND SLEEP APNEA



SNORING AND SLEEP APNEA

Snoring occurs in 40% of Australians. Severe sleep apnea affects about 5% of adults however mild to moderate forms occur in 20% of adults.

In sleep apnea the airway in your throat that leads from the nose and mouth to the lungs collapses when you fall asleep and the tongue muscles relax. If the airway is partially blocked, it usually causes snoring. If the collapse is severe enough it causes an apnea (airway blockage/ absence of breath).

A person with severe sleep apnea may have hundreds of airway collapses each night, which are then corrected by gasping or choking and the tongue moves forward. This cycle repeats over and over which results in lack of oxygen to the body's vital organs and disrupted sleep and daytime fatigue.

Long term consequences are high blood pressure and an increased risk of heart attack or stroke.

Oral appliances are indicated for those with mild and moderate obstructive sleep apnea OSA. They may be also used in people with severe OSA who are unable to tolerate a CPAP machine.

MANDIBULAR ADVANCEMENT SPLINTS (MAS)

Oral appliances / Mandibular Advancement Splints (MAS) are worn only while sleeping. They consist of a 'mouth guard' fitted to both the top teeth and the bottom teeth. They gently hold the lower jaw forward to help open the airway by repositioning the tongue more forward. This helps to reduce the airway blockage. They fit completely within the mouth. You can speak, drink water, yawn and even kiss while wearing them. Mandibular advancement splints should be made to meticulous measurements of your mouth and jaws and this is best done by a dentist experienced in Dental Sleep Medicine.

IS IT COMFORTABLE?

Yes! A properly fitted MAS should not cause discomfort to your teeth or gums or jaw. Most people find that an oral appliance is both more comfortable and more convenient than CPAP.

DOES IT WORK FOR EVERYONE?

A MAS is quite effective in stopping or reducing snoring for most people. Oral appliances will work to reduce sleep apnea for most people too – especially for mild and moderate cases. Their success is improved by fitting them with an experienced dentist and following up with ongoing care to ensure it is still effective and correctly adjusted. Subsequent assessment of success should always be undertaken with the guidance of a sleep physician. It may be necessary to have another sleep study with your MAS in place to check on its success.

GOOD POINTERS TO TREATMENT SUCCESS:

- If your sleep is mild or moderate in severity.
- If your sleep is better on your side than your back.
- If you have a lower jaw that tends to recede.
- If you have a good amount of lower jaw movement.
- If you are in a healthy weight range.

*If you have central sleep apnea (more common in people with heart failure or a stroke), a MAS will almost certainly not work. Seek advice from your sleep specialist.

DISCLAIMER: Information provided in this fact sheet is general in content and should not be seen as a substitute for professional medical advice. Concerns over sleep or other medical conditions should be discussed with your family doctor.

