
Natural Ways to Stop Snoring

stop snoring and
start sleeping



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Introduction

It's a given that we all need a good nights sleep. In fact, more than that, sleep is absolutely necessary for good health, as you will discover later.

Given that sleep is an essential part of the natural life cycle of all creatures, anything that disturbs sleep or makes it less easy for us to reap the full benefits of that sleep must naturally be 'bad' for us, right?

So, it doesn't make much logical sense that one of the most common causes of disturbed or lost sleep should be the cause of so much hilarity and so many music-hall style jokes. But that is exactly what snoring is – a music-hall style joke for so many people.

After all, who hasn't heard the classic one liner of the wife to her husband 'You know, your snoring causes a lack of sleep around here. MINE!'

But, for millions of people all over the world, snoring is no joke at all. It is a condition that causes countless people seemingly endless hours of misery, and is something that can have both adverse social and medical effects on sufferers and those around them.

And, probably the worst part is that, no matter who you are or where you live (assuming that you are not a hermit who lives alone on top of a mountain), each and every one of us knows someone who snores. Indeed, there is probably only a handful of adults on the face of planet Earth who have never had a good night's sleep disturbed by being in the same house as a chronic snorer.

Not to put too fine a point on it, snoring is not a laughing matter. Moreover, with so many people being snorers or family members of people who snore, it is a problem that affects literally millions of people on a worldwide basis.

As with most medical or quasi-medical conditions, there are many different approaches to helping snorers overcome their problems.

Some of these 'treatments' are helpful, whilst others are considerably less so. In the same manner, some of the methods that people turn to in order to banish snoring forever are completely natural, whilst others are anything but.

The purpose of this manual is to introduce you to as many natural snoring 'cures' as possible, in the hope that, firstly, there will be some ideas and concepts here that you have not come across before, and secondly, that some of these new concepts will work for you and your loved ones.

The basic truth is that snoring will destroy a good night's sleep for the snorer themselves and those surrounding them.

However, before starting to look at the causes of and natural 'treatments' for snoring, let us start by considering why sleep is such an important part of everybody's day-to-day existence.

What is the big problem with snoring?

By definition, snoring involves one person who is asleep making a great deal of noise in the middle of the night. Whilst their snoring habits will often not trouble the sufferer themselves, is far more common that it causes a great deal of misery and distress for those around them.

In particular, the partner of a regular snorer is likely to suffer many sleepless nights and sleep deprivation is the almost inevitable result. This not only leads to many of the problems associated with lack of sleep about which you will read over the next few pages, but it can also cause serious upheavals in the normal patterns of life for these folks too.

For example, a study in the USA established that over half of the partners of regular snorers no longer shared the same sleeping space. In effect, they have moved into the spare bedroom and they are going to be forced to stay there until their partners snoring habit is dealt with, because otherwise, they will never get a decent night's sleep.

Furthermore, studies at the [Royal infirmary of Edinburgh in Scotland](#) concluded that snoring places a very real and serious strain on ordinary interpersonal relationships. The study established that in most cases, regular snoring sufferers placed far more emphasis upon this social strain aspect of snoring than on any medical complaint that may or may not be associated with the snoring habit.

The scientists and doctors involved found that many people whose partner was a regular snorer placed great emphasis upon the social embarrassment that they suffered each and every time they slept anywhere but in their own home as a family unit. In effect, for these people, holidays and weekends away were something which they would not even allow themselves to consider.

In pure medical terms, snoring itself is generally considered to be a minor affliction. However, in the Scottish study, it was concluded that the overall impairment of lifestyle caused by living with a serial snorer was significant, and that a great deal of matrimonial difficulties were caused and exaggerated as a result of the problem.

Indeed, they concluded their test by demonstrating that the social and personal lives of snorers and their families improved significantly once these people had their condition surgically treated.

Add this to the fact that, according to the website of the British Snoring and Sleep Apnoea Association (n.b. Apnoea is the British spelling), snoring can also cause sexual problems, and that according to the survey results detailed [on this page](#), many couples never come

anywhere near each other because one partner has a serious snoring problem!

As suggested, whilst snoring itself is a very minor medical condition, it can be indicative of other, more serious problems too.

The bottom line is, for someone who is a habitual snorer, life can be pretty miserable, and unfortunately that misery extends to all of those around them as well.

Let us therefore continue by looking in more detail what can happen when people are deprived of sleep, as this can obviously be a direct result of living with a serial snorer. Indeed, let us consider exactly why sleep deprivation should be a very major concern for any habitual snorer and those who are closest to them.

Section summary

- Snoring is a habit that causes a great deal of distress and misery, both for the snorer themselves and for all of the people around them.
- Snoring has, for example, been proven to cause relationship breakdowns, marital tensions and heightened family stress levels

Why do we sleep?

In today's increasingly frantic and non-stop world, it can often seem strange and somewhat contradictory that most people spend up to one third of their life asleep. Despite the fact that the pace of modern life can make a good eight hours of sleep seem like a decadent luxury instead of the basic necessity that it really is, the truth is that we all need to get enough sleep.

However, despite the fact that through the wonders of modern science, we do understand many of the physical, physiological and psychological effects of sleep on the average human being, the truth is that we really do not fully understand exactly why we need the amount of sleep that we need.

Of course, there are exceptions to this generalization. For example, we pretty much understand why a newborn baby needs an average of 16 hours of sleep a day, and why the amount of sleep that we need in every 24-hour period tends to decrease as we get older. Nevertheless, whilst thousands of hours of research conducted by some of the most pre-eminent medical experts (and advanced computers) on the planet have expanded medical science and understanding by leaps and bounds over the past couple of decades, the exact reason why we need to sleep remains something of a mystery.

At one time in history, for example, it was believed that sleep was the brain's opportunity to close down completely. Nowadays, of course, we know that this is completely untrue. We also know that during sleep, both the brain and the physical body have a chance to recuperate, rebuild and regain strength in order to face the rigors of the coming day.

The bottom line is, however, that there are still many mysteries about sleep and why we actually need to have a sufficient amount of it every night.

For instance, most people can quote examples of perfectly healthy friends or family members who apparently need 10 hours sleep a night. At the same time, they also know other equally healthy people who are around the same age, of similar physique and physical conditioning with a similar job (i.e. one that requires a comparable amount of physical or mental effort) who only seem to need half that amount of sleep every night.

The truth is, there are many things about sleep that we understand extremely well, but there are still other aspects of our night-time snooze that are not so clear.

Therefore, perhaps the best answer to the question 'why do we sleep?' should be something along the lines of 'because we need to', because if nothing else is obvious, the adverse effects of a continued lack of sleep can quickly become all too apparent.

Section summary

- Although it is obvious that everybody needs to get 'enough' sleep to remain healthy and well, our understanding of exactly why we need sleep is still lacking in some respects.
- The bottom line, however, is that an adequate amount of sleep is absolutely essential for everyone, and, as we will see later, snoring is one of the main reasons why people do not get enough rest.

What happens if you do not get enough sleep?

It is generally believed that around half of the adult population of the world does not get as much sleep as they *really* need. The vast majority think that they do but, in truth, they do not.

The reason why this happens varies enormously from person to person, household to household and even country to country, but there is no doubt that snoring is one of the main causes of sleepless nights.

In fact, there is an almost spooky correlation between the percentage of people who do not get enough sleep (around half) and the percentage of people who snore at least occasionally, which is generally put at somewhere between 50-60%! These statistics are something that we will return to again a little later.

The amount of sleep that you get every night is regulated by your 'body clock' which in essence is a combination of the mental activity that is going on in your brain whilst you are asleep, and the physical requirements and needs of your physical body.

As is widely accepted nowadays, whilst asleep, we go through several different sleep phases during some of which our conscious brain is awake and in control. These sleep phases are marked by relatively light sleep and this is the period when we are most likely to be dreaming.

However, there are also other sleep phases where our conscious brain is every bit as asleep as we are because this area of our brain needs recovery and rest time too, and at times like this, it is our unconscious brain that is in control. These are generally the periods when we enjoy our deepest and most restful sleep.

Sleep is an essential period of recuperation and recovery for the whole of the human organism, something that benefits both our body and our minds in a multitude of different ways.

Consequently, if there are periods when you continuously do not get the amount of sleep that you need, you will eventually begin to pay for it and suffer. For most people, such a continuous lack of the necessary solid night's rest will result in daytime drowsiness, irritability, inability to concentrate, lower productivity and a far higher propensity for accidents and mistakes.

Having had enough sleep helps you to concentrate more intensely, learn and understand more quickly, organize memories and generally be sharper and quicker both mentally and physically.

Proper sleep, especially sleep where you are dreaming, is great for balancing your mood, and keeping your temper and more extreme

emotions in check. It is for this reason that a lack of sleep can often lead to heightened irritability and bad temper. This can have an adverse 'knock-on' effect, because it will negatively affect your ability to interact with others on a social level, which can, in turn, lead to arguments as well as social or sometimes marital disturbance.

It is not only you who suffers because of your fatigue

Sleep deprivation can even adversely affect motor skills and those things that we normally do automatically, without giving any thought to them whatsoever.

For example, most adults who drive a car do so entirely automatically – the physical action of driving is a complete habit that we do not have to give any conscious thought to. However, severe sleep deprivation has been seen to cause experienced drivers to drive as if they were under the influence of alcohol.

Their judgment is seriously impaired, their reactions slow down dramatically, and their ability to make sound and logical decisions is significantly reduced. Indeed, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration believe that driver fatigue causes as many as 100,000 automobile accidents a year, and 1500 deaths per annually as a result.

Similarly, because judgment and the ability to think clearly are so adversely affected by sleep deprivation, it is generally believed that a significant percentage of accidents that occur in industry and construction are a direct result of errors and misjudgments made by workers who are over-tired. Of course, this is undoubtedly at least partially due to the physical demands of working in jobs where the physical demands are often so high, but it is equally likely that sleep deprivation plays a significant part.

Your immune and nervous systems

Your immune system: Has something like this ever happened to you? You have been working every waking hour on a big project, or you have just gone through an extremely stressful and trying time in your life that kept you awake for hours every night.

And, just when you finally put a project to bed, or got rid of the problem that was causing you the sleepless nights, you come down with the worst cold or bout of influenza you have ever had?

Guess what? There is no coincidence in this situation whatsoever. You have not been getting enough sleep, and sleep is absolutely essential for recharging the immune system of your body which is what protects you against illnesses, disease and infections. Thus, just when you least need or want to suffer is exactly the time when it is most likely to happen to you!

Your nervous system: Every time you go to pick up your coffee cup in the morning, or put on your shoes, you do so because your brain sends a message to your muscles and limbs that instructs them to undertake the task in hand. The signals or messages that your brain sends to the appropriate parts of your body in order for these simple tasks to be achieved are transported by the neurons in your central nervous system.

Adequate sleep is essential for the neurons of your body to remain in tip-top condition, and therefore the opposite is also equally true. Without enough sleep, it may literally become impossible for you to lift your coffee cup or put on your shoes in the morning!

Your brain and hormones need sleep too!

As suggested previously, there is a period in every night's sleep when your conscious brain finally gets to take a rest. Remember that this is the part of the brain that makes every decision for you every minute of every waking day of your life, so it should be pretty clear that your brain needs rest and recuperation time just as much as the rest of you does.

Indeed, recent research has strongly suggested that the period when the conscious brain is asleep is the time when it replenishes its depleted energy stores and repairs the inevitable cellular damage that is an inevitable result of every knock on and sharp movement of the head. It is even a time when new nerve cells in the brain grow at the fastest rate to replace the millions that die every day.

Thus, sleep deprivation can literally damage your brain and, as if that was not enough, it could also have a seriously adverse effect on the hormonal balance in your body as well.

Hormones are chemicals that control or regulate particular body functions, and the majority of them are made and then released into the body whilst we are asleep. Consequently, not having enough sleep could potentially have a seriously adverse effect on the normal hormonal balance upon which you rely to get through each and every day.

Section summary

- Sleep deprivation can have many adverse effects upon both the individual and everyone else with whom they come into daily contact.
- It can be the cause of what are debatably minor problems such as lack of attention, inability to concentrate and irritability.

- However, these apparently minor problems can often result in major catastrophes like automobile accidents, accidents at work etc.
- Sleep deprivation can also cause problems for your immune system, nervous system, your hormonal balance and the physical condition of your brain.

Sleep deprivation and how to recognize it

Snoring begins to rear its ugly head!

As far as this book is concerned, the central tenet is that snoring is a major cause of sleepless nights, leading to fatigue, irritability, lack of concentration and so on. Thus, snoring is something that any sufferer or those close to them must do something about, and, if possible it makes a great deal of sense to handle the problem in a natural manner.

So, it is logical that you are reading this as a first, second or even third-hand 'snoring victim' and wondering whether you really have a genuine sleep deprivation problem. After all, you don't seem to have any particular problems with your brain, and, so far at least, picking up your coffee cup in the morning has never caused you any major insurmountable difficulties.

In other words, in the absence of any of these more serious effects of sleep deprivation, perhaps you are wondering how to recognize whether your snoring problem (whether it is you who is a snorer or someone else is irrelevant, it is still your problem!) is actually causing you to be deprived of sleep. The objective of this section of the report is to address this query.

How much sleep do you need?

Whilst nowadays it is relatively common for adults in developed Western nations to 'get by' on only five or six hours sleep a night and think that they are properly rested, they are in fact completely wrong!

Although there is no doubt that they will get through the day perfectly adequately, what they obviously do not appreciate is the fact that with a couple more hours sleep every night, they could potentially perform at a far higher level.

However, because they have been getting by on five or six hours sleep for years, 'ticking along' every day in exactly the same way, they have long since lost sight of what their true potential could or might have been.

To do your best and be your best, you must have enough sleep every night.

Over the course of your life the amount of sleep that you need every night will decrease, but as a post-teen adult right up until the time you hit your 60s, you need an average of seven or eight hours of good sleep every night. If you get anything less than this, you will be suffering the effects of sleep deprivation whether you appreciate and understand it or not.

How to recognize sleep deprivation

Sleep deprivation occurs when you are not getting enough sleep to satisfy the requirements of your own body.

Sometimes, this can happen on a short term basis when, for example, you are working late nights and very early mornings on an important work project. This is generally not a major problem, because the chances are that when the project (or whatever else it is that is causing this temporary lifestyle change) is over, you will, more than likely, return to getting a good night's sleep.

Although in this situation, your body will not return back to full normality immediately, the recovery period should be fairly short.

A far more serious complaint is chronic sleep deprivation, which is, for instance, common in professions where working long hours is the norm. An example of this situation would be a junior hospital doctor who is on-call 24 hours a day for a complete week.

Chronic sleep deprivation can also come about because of sleep disorders and other diseases that interfere with sleep, jobs that carry high levels of multiple responsibilities necessitating international travel, and so on.

And, of course, if you have lived with or are a chronic snorer, then it is perfectly feasible that you too are someone who suffers from chronic sleep deprivation. Here is how you might recognize the condition:

- Constant poor performance at school, in work or even on the sports field;
- Difficulties shaking yourself awake in the morning;
- Difficulty with and hesitancy about making decisions, especially when those decisions are relatively minor;
- Difficulty staying awake or actually falling asleep at work, school or college;
- Increased clumsiness and an associated inability to deal with any task that requires manual dexterity;
- An inability to concentrate or focus on the job in hand;
- Feeling moody, irritable and generally ill at sorts with the world.

All of these could be signs of chronic sleep deprivation, although there is of course a possibility that they could also be an indication of other physical or physiological problems.

In any event, if you are suffering from any of these life-limiting 'symptoms', you should consult with your medical practitioner, because you clearly need some kind of assistance.

Whatever it is that is causing these problems for you, it is essential that you get to the root cause as quickly as possible, because the chances of you 'getting better' or making a recovery without any assistance are extremely slim.

Section summary

- Living with or being a chronic snorer will almost inevitably mean that you do not get as much sleep as you need.
- If you believe that you are suffering from a degree of sleep deprivation, it is important to establish whether that genuinely is the case, or whether there is something else having an adverse effect upon your lifestyle.

Looking at some 'snoring basics'

What is snoring?

The correct answer to this question probably depends upon your relationship with the person who suffers from chronic snoring.

If it is you or a close family member who is the snorer, you will probably define snoring as that disgustingly loud noise that keeps half the household awake most of the night! However, the genuine physiological or medical explanation of snoring is slightly different, as you might imagine.

Snoring is the noise caused by the vibration of the soft tissues in the throat of the snorer caused by air passing over them. Often, there is some restriction of the throat that causes the noise to be amplified.

Furthermore, the more noise there is, the more this is suggestive of a higher degree of blockage of the passage of air over these soft tissues during the act of breathing.

The vast majority of people who snore are suffering from what is known as non-apneic snoring, that is, it has nothing to do with a condition known as [sleep apnea](#) which is a condition where someone who is asleep regularly stops breathing for a short period of time. In general, such a person will miss at least one breath, and the episode will often last for around 10 seconds, although in more extreme cases, it can last for up to a minute.

Sometimes, sleep apnea is also related to partial collapses of the airways, hence the proclivity of a sufferer to gasp for breath once they start breathing again, thereby causing a loud amount of 'snoring like' noise.

Somewhat obviously, someone who is suffering from sleep apnea needs medical treatment and is not really the kind of snorer that we are dealing with in this book.

Who suffers from snoring?

Unfortunately, almost everyone who is attempting to sleep within the immediate vicinity of a person who snores could quite rightfully be said to suffer from snoring.

However, in terms of individuals who suffer the snoring condition themselves, it is estimated that around 50% of people are snorers at least some of the time. Of these, approximately half (i.e. 25% of the population as a whole) could be deemed to be habitual or chronic snorers.

It is believed that the condition generally tends to get worse as the sufferer gets older, with the initial onset of snoring at a noticeably audible level initially coming about some time during the sufferer's teens.

Finally, the condition is more prevalent in men than in women, although, because there are external circumstances that affect the propensity to snore, this balance may be changing very gradually (a point that will be expanded upon a little later).

What causes snoring?

There are many different causes of snoring, some of which are entirely natural, whilst others are caused by external influences and circumstances,

Natural causes: As suggested above, snoring is caused by vibration of the soft throat tissues, and its effects are exacerbated by anything that causes restrictions or blockage of air to and from the lungs.

Consequently, anything that restricts the air flow is likely to make snoring considerably worse.

For instance, there can be basic physiological and structural reasons why one person is a chronic snorer whilst another is not. Examples of such structural causes would be seen in a person who suffers from an over-large tongue, enlarged tonsils or adenoids, a narrow jaw, a crooked septum, a small nasal passage or a soft, thick palate.

Anyone who has any of these physical characteristics would be more likely to be snorer than someone who does not.

External influences: There are a great number of possible external influences or circumstances that can turn someone who does not usually snore into a snorer, or can make someone who usually snores a little into a person who suddenly becomes far worse.

Some of these influences will only have a temporary effect, such as the over consumption of alcohol. In this situation, the person with a drink or ten inside them will tend to be closer to an unconscious state than in a normal sleep, and, as a result they will be considerably more relaxed than normal. This advanced state of relaxation will affect the soft tissue in the throat, meaning that there is far more likelihood of this individual snoring.

However, this situation is completely temporary, confined to the night when the over consumption took place. The day after, however, they will be no more likely to snore than they were before, so that in effect, they return to the situation that for them represents normality.

Incidentally, a very similar situation would appertain to those who sometimes use sedatives or sleeping tablets to get a good nights sleep. When they are taking their medication, these people will become far more relaxed than normal and show a tendency to snore, but when they are not, they will not.

Not all of the external influences that cause snoring are as temporary as this, however. For example, heavy smokers and those who suffer from allergies are likely to have a more persistent propensity for snoring.

The effects of heavy smoking, as an example, do not go away overnight. Thus, if the snoring problem becomes so severe for such a heavy smoker that they decide to give up the habit in order to deal with their snoring, it is not going to go away immediately.

The damage done by cigarette smoke to the trachea, bronchial system and throat will only be gradually repaired by the body, and therefore it will take some time before any condition like snoring that has been exacerbated by the smoking habit can improve.

Smoking also damages the lungs, and restricts their capacity for breathing, as does the fact that a person is overweight or obese.

For this reason, snoring is far more common in overweight and obese people than it is in people whose weight is closer to the levels that are considered to be medically desirable.

This last factor is, however, of great significance, simply because the people of most developed Western nations are becoming increasingly obese at an alarming rate. For example, according to data collected last year (2007), there is now only one state in the USA where less than 20% of the population are clinically obese, whilst there are around a dozen states where over 30% fall into this category.

With a well established connection between being overweight and snoring, this factor should tell you two things. Firstly, the statistics showing how many people are currently snorers are going to change dramatically over the course of the next decade, with the number is set to skyrocket pretty much in line with the increase in obesity. Secondly, whilst snoring has traditionally been the domain of the male of the human species, the balance is gradually changing primarily because of the number of overweight and obese females throughout the world.

Snoring is more common in people who breathe through their mouth, so anything that artificially prevents people breathing through the nose is likely to increase the occurrence of snoring. For instance, people who have suffered broken noses that were incorrectly reset, so that their ability to breathe through the nose is correspondingly restricted, will have a heightened susceptibility to snoring (and, as someone who has

an ['Alain Prost' nose](#) because of several breaks, I am an authority on this!).

Finally, it should be mentioned that sleep patterns that have been disrupted for other entirely unconnected reasons can also be a cause of snoring.

A good night's sleep is very much a thing of routine – if you get your full eight hours sleep, you will follow a set sleeping pattern – so anything that disturbs this sleep routine can induce snoring.

Section summary

- The noise of snoring is caused by vibration in the soft tissue of the throat
- 50% of people snore occasionally, whilst half of these are habitual snorers
- There are many causes of snoring, some of which are natural, and others of which are caused by external influences or circumstances.

How to 'treat' or prevent snoring?

Occasionally, surgery is the only answer...

The first thing to say is that there are a minority of cases where people snore because they have a medical problem that needs surgical attention

For example, there are a small number of cases where there are defects of the tongue, [soft palate and/or uvula](#) (which plays a key role in producing the sound of your voice) which between them exacerbate the tendency to snore.

This particular situation can only be dealt with by treating the problem surgically. The surgical procedure involved, known as a uvulopalatopharyngoplasty, is designed to widen the airway of the patient by removing soft-tissue from the back of the throat.

The surgery is, however, quite invasive, and also carries a significant risk of unsatisfactory final results. In particular, there is a chance that as a result of surgery, the scar tissue left will in fact further restrict the air flow in the throat instead of freeing it up.

Alternatively, a relatively modern and far less radical treatment known as Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA) is sometimes used to treat snorers. In this situation, a special heat and radiofrequency generating machine is used to burn the flesh underneath the skin of the soft tissue at the back of the throat.

The theory is that when this burned area recovers, it will comprise scar tissue, which is by nature considerably harder and less flexible than the original soft tissue. Thus, the propensity for this tissue to vibrate and cause the snoring noise is significantly reduced.

Although this sounds singularly painful, the fact is that the pain and discomfort is usually minimal and the treatment can be performed very quickly (often as an outpatient). However, although RFA often reduces the severity of the snoring, it does not usually stop the patient snoring entirely.

In a similar manner, problems of the nose that reduce the ability to breath through the mouth (whether they are natural or caused by accidents as highlighted previously) will likewise need surgical treatment in order to effect a permanent repair, thereby reducing or completely removing the tendency to snore.

Over the counter medicines

There are pills, potions, sprays and medicines available over-the-counter in many a local pharmacy or store that are claimed to be capable of treating or even curing your snoring habit.

However, for some idea of how effective the majority of these concoctions are likely to be, it is necessary to do no more than pay heed to the advices of [Mark Mahowald, MD](#), who is the Director of the Minnesota Regional Sleep Disorders Center and is also a past president of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.

On the subject of over-the-counter pills and sprays, the Doctor comments thus: 'There are all sorts of sprays, pills and tablets that claim to make snoring better, but I have yet to see any validation by scientific studies to support those claims'.

Whilst a lack of scientific validation does not necessarily prove that no over the counter medical treatments for snoring work, it certainly suggests that they are unlikely to be particularly effective for the majority of people who are chronic or habitual snorers.

Dental or orthodontic treatment

Some people can be treated for their snoring habit with a special dental appliance known as a 'mandibular advancement splint' (MAS).

The idea behind the MAS is that it pushes the patients lower jaw forward slightly, so that their tongue is pulled forward by a degree at the same time. This is a relatively common treatment that is generally performed by a dentist or orthodontist, often one who specializes in dentistry related to sleep apnea problems.

Such devices generally prove to be effective in reducing or eliminating the patients snoring problem, particularly if that problem is related to a corresponding sleep apnea condition.

It is even possible to buy over the counter MAS devices, which are often manufactured from a polymer and have the appearance of the kind of gum shields or mouth protection devices favored by sports people. The problem with adopting this 'do it yourself' approach, however, is the fact that, whilst the MAS device itself is perfectly sound, it is likely that the person who purchased that device has no experience of how to fit it properly

Given that the whole objective of the MAS is to slightly alter the position of the patients jaw, it must be apparent that corrector fitment of the device is absolutely critical.

Furthermore, professionally fitted MAS devices are adjustable. Thus, the professional dentist or orthodontist is able to make any necessary adjustments as they go along.

For example, if the device as initially fitted is ineffective, the lower jaw can be extended slightly further by adjusting the device in order to make sure that it works properly in the future. In contrast, if the initial extension is too great then jaw pain will be the result, so, again, having an adjustable device professionally fitted is a major advantage.

In the USA, the MAS device is deemed to be a class 2 medical device, and therefore it is necessary to have a prescription in order to obtain one. However, there is nothing whatsoever stopping a US citizen buying such a device online and importing it for their own usage on a personal basis.

By way of contrast, in other countries such as Australia, MAS devices can be bought without a prescription in any regular pharmacy or high-street store.

Incidentally, as an alternative to using a self applied MAS device, you might like to consider trying '[Chin-Up Strips](#)'. These strips are like an adhesive version of the MSA, except they are 'worn' externally.

You apply the strip to the lower half of your face to prevent you from breathing through your mouth, so that you cannot snore. However, the beauty of using these is that they are not likely to cause you any pain or discomfort, whilst they are very effective for forcing you to breathe through your nose, thus minimizing the possibility of you snoring.

Anyway, as a safer and a probably more effective alternative to using a self-applied MAS device, Chin-Up Strips are definitely worth considering.

Continuous Positive Airway Pressure device

A Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (or CPAP) device is one that is very similar to those that they use to keep new born babies who cannot breathe for themselves breathing. However, it is equally as effective for those who need a fairly proactive device to help them prevent snoring or sleep apnea.

This device is effectively a fairly sophisticated air blower that operates through a mask that is placed over the mouth and nostrils. Once in position the ventilator/blower forces air through the nostrils of the sleeping 'patient'. The machine maintains air pressure at a level that is just sufficient to prevent the throat from collapsing.

Section summary

- If there is a physical reason for a patient's snoring habit, it is possible to treat it with surgery. However, the surgery is not

always successful and in some cases will make the situation worse rather than better.

- It is also possible to buy over-the-counter sprays, pills and medicines which are claimed to get rid of or at least alleviate snoring. There is some skepticism as to whether any of these medicines work.
- Having an MAS device professionally fitted by a dentist or orthodontist is sometimes effective. Over-the-counter MAS devices tend to be considerably less so.
- CPAP can also help, but are really only likely to be used for the most chronic cases.
- All of these solutions might work. However, they should all be last resorts, only to be considered after you try all of the natural remedies highlighted later.

Fighting snoring naturally

There are many alterations that you can make in your life that can help to reduce or even get rid of your snoring problem entirely. Some of these changes are relatively minor, almost 'tricks' if you like, but others represent significant changes in your life, and you should understand that some of these larger scale changes do require a degree of sacrifice and/or effort.

Let us therefore begin looking at the lifestyle changes that you can make in order to reduce your snoring habit or that of a loved one by looking at the larger changes that are arguably going to be the ones that are hardest to handle.

Lose weight

No-one truly wants to be overweight or obese, and if you are anything like 90% of people who are carrying around too much flab, you probably already know that shedding the extra kilos is going to be good for you in almost every imaginable way.

You will be healthier, fitter, look better and very probably be a far happier person as a result.

Well, now you have found yet another reason for losing weight, because it is a fact that you are far more likely to snore if you are overweight or obese.

There are two reasons that this. Firstly, extra weight on your frame puts pressure on your lungs, and thereby reduces their ability to pull in enough air when you are inhaling, and to expel all the waste gas when you exhale. Thus, when the body of an overweight person slows down during sleep, the tendency to breathe 'snatchily' becomes much greater, and so the likelihood of snoring increases dramatically.

Secondly, if you are overweight, there is, by definition, extra flesh all over your body and it is perfectly possible that there is even additional soft flesh in the lining of your throat. In this case, there is simply more soft-tissue available to vibrate and make the snoring noise.

According to our friend Dr. Mahowald, even a relatively modest weight reduction program that sheds only 10% of your body mass will significantly increase your ability to breathe whilst sleeping without snoring.

Give up alcohol and tobacco

Overindulgence in alcohol shortly before sleep is probably one of the most common causes of snoring, particularly in people who would not otherwise snore. Indeed, the classic cartoon-character drunk is almost

inevitably flat on his back or slumped in a corner snoring, and it really is no coincidence that this should be the case.

The fact is that overindulgence in alcohol will turn people who would not otherwise snore into snorers, and make the noise produced by people who have a relatively minor snoring habit into something akin to an over-amplified foghorn.

Of course, it is now relatively widely accepted that the odd glass of red wine, for example, can be good to you, but, in general, alcohol is a poison that your body is just not designed to ingest.

In short, consuming too much alcohol is every bit as bad for you as being overweight. It also will makes you sound like a Boeing 747 on takeoff, and from both of those reasons, you should avoid overindulgence in alcohol.

As for smoking, not only does it make you snore considerably more than you would otherwise, it is also gradually killing you bit by bit!

If you are still an active smoker, then you are almost certainly aware of the risks of your habit, but it even makes a major difference as far as your tendency to snore is concerned which you will not have considered before.

Most smokers understand the risks that they take, and are equally well aware that the chances of their habit getting them in the end are extremely high. Perhaps they consider the distress, trauma and misery that it will bring to their friends, family and loved ones when they suffer an unnecessarily early demise, but perhaps not.

However, if you are a habitual chronic snorer, that habit is bringing misery and distress to your family every day, right now. This is not something that *might* happen after you have gone and no longer here to worry about it – it is something that is happening right in front of your eyes every morning when people stumble bleary-eyed out of bed, and it is a problem that you can begin to address today by stopping smoking.

Snoring causes misery, unhappiness as well as physical illnesses, sickness (you read in an earlier chapter what sleep deprivation can do to people) and often premature death. Your smoking habit is causing you to snore, and your snoring is making life miserable for everyone else.

Stop smoking, however, and the problem will gradually begin to get better.

For your own health and for that of the loved ones who surround you, smoking should be banished from your life for ever.

Give your a head a steam bath

Nasal congestion will naturally encourage you to breathe through your mouth whilst you are sleeping, and that is one of the primary causes of snoring.

It therefore makes sense to try to clear your nasal passages as much as possible before going to bed, and one of the easiest ways of doing this is with steam. Put a reasonable sized bowl on the table, fill it with boiling hot water, bend down to the bowl with a towel over the back of your head to prevent the steam escaping, and breath in through your nose.

This works particularly well if you add an additional natural decongestant to the water, such as an onion. Surprising as it may sound, onions are natural decongestants (have you ever noticed that, when you chop a strong onion, it might not make you cry, but it certainly makes you sniff a lot), so adding a couple of slices of onion should make this treatment even more effective.

However, for many people, the steam on its own is more than enough to free up their nasal passages, making it far easier and more comfortable for them to breathe through their nose after they go to bed. This in turn reduces their reliance on breathing through their mouth, hence it also reduces the chances of them snoring.

Have you changed your pillows recently?

People who have allergies or are prone to allergic reactions are often people who snore as well. It therefore makes a great deal of sense to banish potential sources of allergic reactions from your night-time environment, and one of the most likely sources of such a reaction is an old, well worn pillow.

Old pillows are often home to millions of [unwanted visitors](#) whose bodily secretions will often trigger allergic reactions in humans.

Because it is literally impossible to get rid of these 'visitors' by washing and cleaning your pillows, the only solution is to buy new ones.

And, when you do change your pillows, go for a firmer variety rather than a softer one. Softer pillows encourage your neck muscles to relax, so that your head tilts back and the 'snoring mechanisms' engages, and within a few moments, you are snoring at the top of your 'voice' once again!

It is even possible to buy special anti-snoring pillows such as the ones that you can 'price shop' on [on this page](#). These are pillows that are designed by sleep experts to provide a sleep angle where snoring will be all but impossible for both those whose sleep on their back and on

their side (although you need different pillows depending on how you sleep).

Some are not especially expensive either, so it could be worth a try!

Whatever type of new pillow you choose, whilst it may or may not help to alleviate your snoring habit, even if it does not do so, you must surely sleep easier every night knowing that there are a few million less creatures sharing your bed with you!

Natural nasal strips

Studies have shown that applying nasal strips to your nose can bring temporary congestion relief. This is significant because, as already suggested on several occasions, if you can breathe more easily through your nose, it makes it less likely that you will breathe through your mouth, and thus the chances of you snoring are significantly reduced.

The problem, however, is that the vast majority of nasal strips on sale in pharmacies and high street stores do not use natural ingredients or decongestants in the manufacturing process. On the contrary, most commercially manufactured nasal strips use chemical pharmaceuticals as their primary ingredient.

There are, however, a couple of places where you can buy natural nasal strips online. For example, in the USA, you can buy a completely natural product from Amazon.com, whilst in the UK you can buy the same thing from InfoHealth.co.uk.

The problem with using nasal strips as a way of reducing the chances of snoring is that, whilst they will clear your nose and therefore make it easier for you to breathe, they do not actually force you to do so. And, as a regular snorer, you have already established a pattern of breathing through your mouth.

Thus, the chances that you will suddenly stop breathing through your mouth simply because you can do so a little more easily are fairly remote.

Consequently, the ideal solution would be to use something like the Chin-Up Strips that we looked at earlier to force you to sleep with your mouth closed, and natural nasal strips to keep your nasal airways clear.

Change your sleeping position

The noise of snoring is generated when your soft palate, tongue, tonsils, uvula and the muscles in the back of your throat all rub against one another as air passes over them.

Quite obviously, this is far more likely to occur when you are lying flat on your back than it is in any other sleeping position, because whilst

lying in this position, everything will naturally be falling backwards into your throat.

Thus it is that many sleep experts recommend that people who snore should sleep on their side, because in this position it is far less likely that the soft tissues of your throat will be able to vibrate in the way that they have to in order for snoring to happen.

In a similar manner, if you elevate your head by using a thicker pillow or several pillows so that you are in a semi-prone position, you once again change the angle or direction in which the soft tissue will collapse when you fall asleep. Consequently, sleeping in this 'head up' position should significantly reduce the chances of you snoring once again.

Section summary

- If you want to stop snoring, you will have to make some significant lifestyle changes.
- The first is that you must lose weight, the second is that you should refrain from overindulging in alcohol, and the third is that you must stop smoking.
- In addition, you should use steam as a nasal decongestant, as well as considering using natural nasal strips whilst you are asleep for the same purpose.
- Also, make a habit of changing your pillows on a regular basis, particularly if you are susceptible to allergic reactions.

Natural tips and tricks to help you stop snoring

In addition to everything that you read in the previous section, there are lots of tips and tricks that people utilize to help them stop snoring.

Many of the things that people do are based on superstition and 'old wives tales', the kind of things that have little or no practical use in reality other than making people feel that they are doing something to address their snoring problem.

This is not however the case in every situation.

What you will therefore find listed below are many practical tips, ideas and concepts that you can apply at home which should help to reduce the incidence of snoring in the household.

Stay off your back: If you try sleeping in a different position, such as lying on your side and you find that it works (you will have to ask others for their judgment, of course), then it obviously makes sense to stay in that position as much as you can.

But, that is not necessarily going to be an easy thing to do. After all, once you are asleep, you have no control over your movement, and we have all had those restless nights when you are 'tossing and turning', literally finding yourself in a different position on a different part of the bed every time you wake up.

That is why some people really do swear by the old (somewhat clichéd) idea of sewing something to the back of your night shirt or pajamas as way of preventing you rolling onto your back.

Traditionally, the idea was that you sew a tennis ball to the back of whatever it is that you go to bed in (I find that old cotton reels work better for me, but that is personal choice) so that every time you roll onto your back, it is immediately uncomfortable and you roll back on your side again.

This works, but be aware that in the early days especially, you are just as likely to wake up when you roll onto your ball/reel as you are to roll back onto your side. Hence, you should be ready for a few sleepless nights yourself until you get used to it!

Avoid dairy products before bed: Dairy products can cause mucus build up, which is that last thing that you need immediately before sleep, as it is likely to lead to a blocked nose.

Keep to a regular sleeping routine: A regular sleep regime that you can stick to on a consistent basis helps teach your body to follow regular sleep patterns, which augurs well for a good nights proper rest.

Take regular exercise: Regular exercise is always a good idea as far as your general health and well-being are concerned, but it does also have specific benefits for the snorer too. For example, exercise give you an outlet for your excess energy and aggression, which means that it is far easier to get that much needed full nights undisturbed rest. Plus it helps you to lose weight, and we have already seen how that can help solve the problem.

Avoid rich foods: Do not be tempted by a rich diet that is heavy on sugar and fat laden foods like cakes, pizzas, candies, chocolate and cookies. Be wary of eating too many of these foods at any time, but especially within the two hours before bedtime.

No full stomach: Even if your diet is super-healthy, you should still never go to bed on a full stomach, because the distended shape of your stomach can restrict your airways and breathing.

A warm drink and honey: A warm drink before bedtime helps many people to reduce their snoring tendencies, especially when honey is included in the drink. Not only does the warm drink relax you, but the honey helps to line the walls of your trachea. Some people swear by a mixture of honey, warm water and apple cider vinegar for a late night drink that is relaxing but not too much so.

Avoid antihistamines: Whilst antihistamine based drugs have many medical benefits, because one of the side effects is that they relax you and that includes the muscles of the throat, making you more likely to snore.

Get in training: One of the primary reasons that most people snore is because their throat muscles relax too much. One of the reasons that this happens is that those muscles are too flaccid and weak. They are not trained or kept in peak condition.

So, think of how you can train those muscles once again so that they become strong and therefore relatively controllable.

One idea is to take classical singing lessons, because that kind of training is all about learning how to control your breathing and the muscles of your throat, which are *exactly* the kind of disciplines you need to be able to master so that you can control your own snoring without external assistance.

Here's a suggestion that I would be willing to bet every single cent that you have never before considered. Ever thought about learning to play the didgeridoo?

No? Oh, that is a shock!

But you should, because if you can master this instrument, there is every chance you will never snore again. The reason is the way that you play it, because it relies on you being able to breath in a circular motion, taking air in through the nose and breathing it out again through your mouth.

Now, as a snorer, you probably think that breathing through the mouth is the last thing you need to learn, but in this case, not so! The whole circular breathing concept is wonderful training for all of the muscles of your lower head and neck, so by the time you can didgeridoo to your friends, you will have marvelous muscle control of exactly the type that will help you banish your snoring blues forever (and try playing those on your didgeridoo!).

Section summary

- There are many ideas that you can try for yourself that could help you reduce your snoring habit.
- Even if they do nothing for your snoring, simple ideas like getting fitter and adopting a more sensible, regular pattern of sleep will be good for you in a more general way.
- Train yourself to breathe properly and 'tune up' the muscles of your throat by learning to sing or play a (wind) musical instrument.

Natural medicines

Like most of the pharmaceutical anti-snoring sprays and pills that you can buy across the counter in the pharmacy or store, there are many similar treatments that are entirely natural that you might want to consider.

And in the same way, most of the natural products tend to focus on achieving the same primary objective as their pharmaceutical brethren which generally tends to be the relief of congestion.

The obvious advantage of using these products is that there are no potentially harmful pharmaceuticals in them and that is no small consideration in itself. This is particularly true as we are talking about a respiratory condition and those kinds of conditions are notoriously sensitive to chemical irritation.

So, if you have to use sprays and pills to reduce congestion, you should definitely be using those with only natural ingredients. Such a spray might, for example, be handy to keep as an emergency stand-by.

To give you some idea of what is available in the market, take [a look here](#). You might also want to [search eBay](#) to see what is available when you search with a term like 'stop snoring'.

However, despite the fact that these medicines are natural, there are nevertheless a couple of points that you should consider.

Firstly, you shouldn't really need them. You have already seen that simple steam is one of the best decongestants there is, so why spend good money of sprays and pills when you can do the same job at home, for free?

Which brings me to the second point. Whilst most of these products are not necessarily all that expensive when you buy one unit – a bottle of pills or a can of spray, for instance – if you use them regularly, you might come to rely on them, and need to buy a new bottle or can every week or even every couple of days.

That is when it starts to get expensive, and, as you don't really need them, there is no need to get into that situation.

Section summary

- There are lots of natural sprays and pills that you can buy online that could very well help to alleviate your condition.
- However, there are equally good 'treatments' available in your home for free, so save money by using them.

Coping as a snorers partner

As we have already covered at length and in detail, your main problem as the partner of a chronic snorer is a total lack of sleep and all of the associated problems that sleep deprivation can bring.

The medical and physiological problems wrought by sleep deprivation are very real, so if for just one moment you think that sleep deprivation is a real problem for you, get to see your doctor or medical practitioner as soon as possible.

However, do be wary of the advice that they might give you and, in particular, try to avoid using sleeping pills or tranquilizers as a way of getting a good nights sleep, even if your medical adviser is all for the idea and more than happy to prescribe them.

I would probably be telling you nothing that you do not already know if I suggested that taking sleeping pills and tranquilizers could simply be a case of getting rid of one problem – snoring – whilst taking on a far bigger and potentially way more dangerous problem with sleeping pills and tranquilizers.

But if you cannot get any sleep, you need to do something, that much is clear.

Of course, if you live in a house or apartment where there is a spare bedroom, you could always move in there but, as we have already seen, this is not a great step as far as keeping your relationship happy and stable is concerned!

And, think about it this way. If you have already moved out of the previously shared bedroom, that is hardly likely to encourage them to make the necessary effort to curb their snoring, is it? After all, what's the point (they think), you have already moved out and the relationships is already on a rocky road to who-knows-where!

There are, however, two steps that you can take to make sure that things work out given a little time and a degree of patience and tolerance on the part of both parties concerned.

Step one is to encourage your partner to do whatever is necessary to reduce their tendency to snore. Whether that is losing weight, cutting down on the demon drink, wearing Chin-Up Strips in bed or whatever, it does not matter as long as you can help and encourage them to do what is needed.

And the second thing is, get yourself a copious supply of earplugs!

For years, earplugs have been the best friends of night shift workers everywhere, because they are designed to do one job only, and that is,

shut out the noise. Of course, they are not specifically designed to shut out the noise of a partner who sounds like he is landing a Jumbo Jet in the bedroom every twenty seconds or so, but if you have never tried earplugs before, you might be surprised how effective they can be.

Plus, even if you have tried them before, they are now more effective than they were even just a handful of years ago. Add to that the fact that, this time, you know that with your help and encouragement, your partner is going to win the battle, so it is only a temporary situation anyway!

Section summary

- Being the partner of a snorer is not easy, and sleep is probably something you do not get a great deal of, so do visit our Doctor.
- However, if at all possible, do not resort to sleeping pills or tranquilizers.
- Instead, help your partner to cure their snoring problem naturally and invest in a good supply of earplugs.

Conclusion

As suggested in the introduction, despite the fact that snoring is often the cause of a good degree of hilarity, you will generally find that the people who find snoring most funny are not sufferers themselves!

As we have seen, snoring can cause untold misery and unhappiness for those who snore and everyone who is around them at night – family, friends, even neighbors – so it really is a condition that you need to address if you are a snorer yourself.

Fortunately, whilst there are some radical solutions that some people are forced to turn to (in particular, invasive surgery) that is not something that is going to be necessary for the vast majority of people with a snoring problem.

Indeed, as highlighted in this book, there are lots of relatively easy and simple things that you can do at home without spending money on anything that can help you banish your snoring problem once and for all. Even better, many of these 'treatments' are entirely natural and good for you in many other ways as well (losing weight, stopping smoking and so on), so even if they do not get rid of your snoring problem, you will benefit in other ways even so.

Beyond that, there are other smaller changes that you can make – go for a diet that is less heavy on rich foods (which is not going to harm your chances of losing weight either), cut down on the dairy produce and so on – that are all small changes that could nevertheless help to reduce your tendency to snore by a little bit. And, as they say about so many things in life, every little bit helps!

Above all, try each and every natural step that you read of in this book before resorting to potentially harmful chemical pharmaceuticals or even worse, invasive surgery. By doing so, the chances are that you will be able to reduce your tendency to snore, and that is going to make life far more pleasant both for you and the loved ones who surround you.

After all, what could possibly be more pleasant than a great night's sleep?